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INTUITIONS.

INTUITIONS

AND

SUMMARIES OF THOUGHT

By C. N. BOVEE

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

"A man would do well to carry a pencil in his pocket, and write down the thoughts of the moment. Those that come unsought for are commonly the most valuable, and should be secured, because they seldom return."

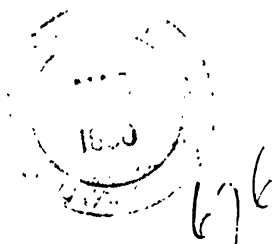
BACON

—— "Every day
A little life, a blank to be inscribed
With gentle *thoughts*."

ROBERTS

CAMBRIDGE
RIVERSIDE PRESS

1862.




Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1862, by
C. N. BOVEN,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the
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ADVERTISEMENT.

A SMALL part of these volumes originally appeared in the "American Review," under the title of "Thoughts, Feelings, and Fancies," in 1846; a larger proportion, in a volume bearing the same title, was published in 1857; and a lesser, under the title of "Suggestions," contributed to the "Atlantic Monthly," in 1858. The rest is new. Altogether, the excisions, revisions, and additions are so numerous, and the form of presentation of the subject-matter is so modified, that this may be regarded as substantially a new work.

In the preface to his former volume, the author indicated the secret history of its production. The book, he observed, was "the result of a habit, early adopted, and long adhered to, of jotting down from time to time, as occasions served and convenience permitted, such impressions, deemed worthy to be noted, as occurred to him in the intervals of active professional busi-



ness." He added, that it was then presented to the reader, with somewhat of the hope that he might be able, later in life, to make it worthier of his consideration.

Sustained in his purpose by the numerous quotations from his earlier and less mature thought, — a greater part of which has been republished many times in that form,* — the author now ventures the further offering then foreshadowed.

* The writer would not have adverted to this circumstance, were it not that most of the journals which have thus honored him, have omitted to indicate the source whence their excerpts were taken; thus giving rise to a possible misapprehension — in the absence of this explanation, and so far as relates to that portion of the present volumes previously published — that he has appropriated without acknowledgment from their columns, instead of merely bringing together again these strayed children of his thought.





INTUITIONS.

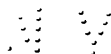


ABILITIES.

IT is in vain that he seeks dominion abroad, who is not kingly at home.

An Appreciation of the Superior Forces of Character essential to their Development—Incalculably mischievous are those systems of faith and philosophy that deny to humanity its proper nobleness. Through these, rarely do we reach to a knowledge of our highest powers. And even when we rise to a more adequate appreciation of the generous capabilities of nature, it is usually late in life, and when our powers are on the wane. Grovelling in the dust of low ambitions, we ignore our nobler attributes, and develop chiefly the lesser affections.

Correlation of Forces—Inextricably, by fine affiliations, the interest of each is involved in that of all. The skill of each man, the graces of every



woman, and the accomplishments of both, add to the riches, the pleasures, and the value of life.

Dormant Properties of Character — Power is chiefly latent. Capacities for superior performance everywhere abound. This mind of ours, like the earth beneath our feet, teems with exhaustless riches. The conditions of development only are needed.

Misdirection of Powers — As it is doubtful whether medicines, from the injudicious use made of them, do not kill almost as many as they cure, so it is questionable whether our ingenuity, through a mistaken application of it, is not as often exerted to our injury as our good. It is, indeed, a remark of Shenstone that our itch of reasoning, and spirit of curiosity, preclude more happiness than they can advance. "What numbers of diseases," he says, "are entirely artificial things, far from the ability of a brute to contrive. We disrelish and deny ourselves cheap and natural gratifications, through speculative presciences and doubts about the future. We cannot discover," he adds, "the designs of the Creator: we should learn then of



brutes to be easy under that ignorance, and happy in those objects that seem obviously intended for our happiness."

Natural and Acquired Powers—Ambitious princes value inherited kingdoms not so much as conquered provinces. So, also, able men are not wont to be extravagantly vain of the ability conceded to them, or of their success in their own peculiar fields of labor. They are oftener found to regard with complacency their efforts in departments in which they are not supposed to excel, success there being, more decisively, an evidence of natural genius rather than of acquired mastery. Richelieu could forgive a conspiracy against his power, whose strong foundations he had laid so deep with years of toil, but not the bad taste that failed to appreciate his play.

Perverted Abilities—Perhaps the greatest benefit arising from the necessary restraints imposed by parents on their children is, that they facilitate self-restraint in after-life. "Let nothing be done to break his spirit; the world will do that soon enough," said Lord Holland of his

son, Charles James Fox. Nothing could be sounder than the principle here suggested. But there is a wide difference between breaking and restraining a too exuberant spirit. This difference his lordship failed to perceive; and the consequences to his richly endowed son, and to the world, which he was formed to benefit, were grievous in the extreme. "Of the numerous malefactors who have expiated their crimes on the scaffold," says Captain Jesse, in his admirable sketch of this remarkable man, "it may be questioned whether one half of them have occasioned a tithe of the mischief which such gifted individuals as Fox and Sheridan have unthinkingly effected in the circle of their intimate friends." And in another place, speaking of Fox's propensity for gaming, he adds, "The result of so headstrong and infatuated a career may be easily imagined. At the age of thirty, having ruined himself and half his friends, this gifted and extraordinary man had sunk into a needy and almost penniless spendthrift, frequently in want of a guinea to supply the exigencies of the moment, and trusting to the charm of his genius, to his persuasive manners, and to his delightful conversational powers, to

induce others either to relieve his wants or to administer to his extravagances. Even the waiters at the clubs became his creditors for insignificant sums, and the very chairmen in St. James's Street were in the habit of importuning him for the payment of their paltry arrears."

Possibilities of Future Development—There is enough of good and of capacity in the world to regenerate it, were they only rightly invested. It is from the false directions mistakenly given to its best elements, that society has not made greater advances. So much of what is best in us runs to waste! The great office of the future will be, more wisely to apply its infinite resources of worth and intelligence—resources adequate, when fully developed and properly directed, to the production of that golden age of which youth has dreamed and poets sung.

ACTION.

FEW minds wear out; more rust out.

Sad thoughts attend upon folded arms. "It is action," says Owen Feltham, "that doth keep

the mind both sweet and sound." A brave deed performed, a noble object accomplished, give a fillip to the spirits, an exhilaration to the feelings, like that imparted by champagne, only more permanent. It is, indeed, admirably well said, by one wise to discern the truth of things, and able to give to his thought a vigorous expression,* that "a man feels relieved and gay when he has put his heart into his work, and done his best; but what he has said or done otherwise shall give him no peace."

It is not creditable to be satisfied with the results of a limited activity. Large natures have usually large desires, and only the small are satisfied with the small.

There are three bases of action: the basis of certainty, of probability, and of possibility. Cautious natures love the first, speculative natures the next, and daring natures the last.

Methods of Action—Practically, all knowledge resolves itself into four forms: the knowledge of what to do, how to do, and when to do, and of what not to do.

* Emerson.

The thing which an active mind most needs is a purpose and a direction worthy of its activity.

Versatile natures require varieties of activity for their full development; but duller natures best succeed in plodding on in one direction, by subordinating their faculties to one master-passion and one pursuit.

Great personal activity at times, united with closely sedentary and severely studious habits at others, are among the forces by which able men accomplish notable enterprises. Sitting with thoughtful brows by their evening firesides, they originate and mature their plans; after which, with energies braced to their work, they move to the easier conquest of difficulties accounted formidable, because they have deliberated upon, and mastered, the best methods for overcoming them.

The activity of the young is like that of rail-cars in motion—they tear along with noise and turmoil, and leave peace behind them. The quietest nooks, invaded by them, lose their qui-

etude as they pass, and recover it only on their departure. Time's best gift to us is serenity.

Actions and Motives—Actions are obvious, motives uncertain. Of motives God only is an unerring judge. The usage of assigning motives for all actions is an impertinence, and involves, at every step, a liability to error, and a risk of injustice. If an action is noble, and the attributed motive base, an effect of pointing it out is to impair the force of a worthy example.

Motives are better than actions. Men drift into crime. Of evil they do more than they contemplate, and of good they contemplate more than they do.

Action and Reaction—The forces that enter most largely into our being are those of action and reaction. We swing, like pendulums, with more or less regulated motion, between opposite extremes—from good swaying to evil; from pleasure to pain; from hope to despair; from expectation to disappointment; from appetite to satiety; from love to indifference—and back again. The best of life is between extremes.

Resources for Action—The great needs of almost every mind are; first, of a clearer faith in God; next, of a more generous estimate of its powers; and then, of a firmer purpose to develop them. "Sir," said Patrick Henry, in one of his outbursts of eloquence—"Sir, we are not weak, if we make a proper use of the means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. Sir, the battle is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, and the brave."

What are your means for accomplishing so great a work? is the usual inquiry addressed to ambitious projectors; the means referred to being visible means—means tangible to the eye and palpable to the touch, capable of enumeration, and susceptible of description. But in nearly all such inquiries, the essential mistake is made of assuming that the means to be relied upon must needs be material means, while in numerous instances they are almost wholly within the mind of the projector, and arise out of the structure and capability of his character. "A thorough fitness for any end," says Hazlitt, "implies the means." It was also said of Sir

William Jones, by his preceptor, that "so active was his mind, that if he were left, naked and friendless, on Salisbury Plain, he would, nevertheless, find the road to fame and riches."

Wasted Activity — It is a peculiarity of inferior capacities, in what they say and do, to waste their energies in a useless redundancy of speech and action — to ply the hammer after the nail is driven to the head; while it is no less the characteristic of a more executive genius, to neither say nor do more or less than the occasion demands.

ADDRESS.

ADDRESS makes opportunities; the want of it gives them.

ADVENTURERS.

IT is invidious to distinguish particular men as adventurers; we are all such.

AFFAIRS.

WHEN affairs are at their worst, a bold project may retrieve them by giving an assurance, else wanting, that hope, spirit, and energy still exist.

AFFECTATION.

A HIGH achievement of character is to be simple, natural, and unaffected. Indeed, the art of commanding respect is largely the art of being real — of being without art.

Affectation of any kind evinces, besides a want of truthfulness, a want of sagacity. He that cannot make show of a good natural character, cannot long sustain, without discovery, the semblance of such a character. It is indeed worth noting, as a journalist observes, how difficult it is, for any length of time, to maintain a sham. "Everybody and everything," he says, "are against it. To be permanently accounted a good man, you must *be* a good man."

The quickest observers of affectation are the

affected themselves: unreal, they suspect unreality.

AFFECTIONS.

BEAUTIFUL as are the affections, they are never so beautiful as when they are found adorning the abode of the poor man, and surviving years of hardship, the ills of poverty, and the cares of domestic life. The humblest home so sanctified, both the eye of God (it may be supposed) and the heart of man love to dwell upon.

The state and quality of the affections may be more easily recognized, and are, therefore, more generally known, than the character and phenomena of the thoughts, from being less dependent upon language for expression; from their finding a natural expression in our actions—permeating them as water finds its way through the hardest substances.

AFFINITIES.

THE less of nobleness in its surroundings, the more necessity for an elevated nature to

remain loyal to its higher affinities. Thus, purity, in times of corruption, has the double force of protest and example. The darker the night, the more resplendent and cheering the light that shines through it.

Even knowledge of character is dependent upon kindred affinities. It is not until a certain electrical relation is established between any two persons that they come to know much of each other. They may often associate, and even live together, but until this mysterious relation — *rappor*t — occurs, they will continue in all essentials but as strangers.

Place an inferior character in contact with the finest circumstances, too, and, from wanting affinities with them, he will still remain, from no fault of his own, insensible to their attractions. Take him up the mount of vision, and show him the finest scene in nature, and, instead of taking in the broad circle of its beauty, he will, it is probable, have his attention engrossed by something insignificant under his nose. I was reminded of this on taking my little boy, when three years old, to the top of

the New York Reservoir. Placing him on one of the parapets, I endeavored to call his attention to the more salient and distant features of the extended prospect; but the little fellow's mind was too immature to be at all appreciative of them. His interest was confined to what he saw going on in a dirty inclosure on the opposite side of the street, where two or three goats were moving about. After watching them with curious interest for some time, "See, papa, see," said he, "dem is pigs down dare." Was there need to quarrel with my fine little fellow for seeing pigs where there were only goats, or goats where there was much worthier to be seen?

It is even true, that the society of particular persons acts as a solvent upon particular qualities of our minds—specific memories, ideas, and feelings—making them to flow sometimes like a mill-race. And this, too, even with persons with whom we have had no previous acquaintance! The metaphysician will say that this is done through association, and his explanation at once relieves the subject of much obscurity. "I talked for half an hour to his

forehead," said Coleridge, in speaking of his first interview with Hazlitt. Probably, in Coleridge's mind, with the peculiar form of Hazlitt's brow there was associated a peculiar conformation of character.

AFFRONTS.

IN seasons when the energies flag, and our ambition fails us, a rebuff is a blessing, by rousing us from inaction, and stirring us to more vigorous efforts to make good our pretensions.

AGE.

YOUTH is the season of receptivity, and should be devoted to acquirement; and manhood of power—that demands an earnest application. Old age is for revision.

Extreme age involves loss of power to act, but not so much loss of wisdom to judge. Old men, therefore, though less fitted for executive stations, are still the best of counsellors.

Men, like growing fruit, should mellow as time advances; but more frequently, estranged

from what is proper to them, like fruits prematurely gathered, they only decay into a semblance of ripeness. Indeed, we serve the devil in our youth, God in our old age — thinking if we journey towards hell while our limbs are sound, we can turn when they fail us, and get to heaven on crutches.

Our predominant desires change according to our different ages. The prevailing desire of children is to be amused; of a young and pretty woman, for admiration;* of the same woman, after marriage, to be considered respectable; and in later years, when a matron, to have her children well thought of. A young man's predominant desire is to stand well with his comrades; afterwards to take a certain rank in his profession; and later still, to be esteemed of weight in his community. As we advance in years, too, our interest lessens in many things, and increases in others. An ancient belle in a ball-room — the scene of her former triumphs — regrets, it is probable, not more the loss of her beauty, than she wonders at the feelings that

* First a fine gown, and then a fine man to admire it, is the order of a young lady's wishes.

have faded with it. Like the withered roses of a once gay garland, the feelings of youth command in age a melancholy interest.

It is a curious circumstance, illustrating the objection that ladies have to disclose their age, that nowhere in Mrs. M.'s very entertaining memoirs is her age stated, or anything from which it can be inferred. But, beauty of the higher sort is not so much affected by time. Not to refer to Ninon de l'Enclos, who is said to have turned hearts with love at a period when heads are usually turned gray with age, almost the handsomest woman I have seen was at least forty.

Oliver Wendell Holmes quotes Balzac as saying that the love-making capacity of a man is greatest at about fifty. Something like this is intimated by Bacon, in his essay on Youth and Age. "Heat and vivacity in age," he says, "are an excellent composition for business." He also tells us, that "Natures that have much heat, and great and violent desires and perturbations, are not ripe for action till they have passed the meridian of their years."

Young people seldom open their minds to their elderly seniors, from a mistaken impression that they have outlived all sympathy with the feelings of their time of life. But this is far from being a just view of the subject: the old are more observant of what is passing in the world of feeling of the young than, were they aware of it, would be altogether agreeable to them. They require no direct revelation of youth's secrets, for they are already in possession of them, numerous tell-tale circumstances revealing to them many curious things of which youth itself has as yet but a very imperfect consciousness.

Old men, too, rarely make confidants of old men; and what Schiller says, that the last travellers who join company on a long journey have always the most to say to one another, is not true of the journey of life. What is called the garrulity of age is usually only an occasional overflow of reminiscence, and seldom displays itself except in their communication with younger people, and in their talk about the past — that past so dear to them as a part of themselves — and those scenes of which they can say,

"All of which I saw; much of which I was."

Among the most agreeable of companionships is that of an old man* who has the art of making his company acceptable to the young. To "the years that bring the philosophic mind," and the rich stores of a varied experience, he adds the tastes, the sympathies, the vivacity, and the freshness of feeling which, according to a cruel and unjust prejudice, are supposed to be inconsistent with age.

Growing Old—Perhaps the finest of all accomplishments is that of growing old gracefully. Next to this is the merit of accepting the fact

* Perhaps it is well to define here what is meant by this phrase—an old man. No man is entitled to be spoken of as an old man till he has turned seventy. Only at this period—a period still consistent with unimpaired intellectual vigor—does the reverence proper to age begin. And this view accords with that of the wise Frenchman, M. Flourens. "The first ten years of life," he says, "are infancy, properly so called; the second ten is the period of boyhood; from twenty to thirty is the first youth; from thirty to forty, the second. The first manhood is from forty to fifty-five; the second from fifty-five to seventy. This period of manhood is the age of strength, the *manly* period of human life. From seventy to eighty-five is the first period of old age, and at eighty-five the second old age begins."

of old age with serenity and unfaltering courage. Little as there was in Metternich to esteem, in his character of upholder of political misrule, it is scarcely possible to read the concluding words of a spirited letter from him to Humboldt without admiration. "You complain, my dear Baron," he writes, "at finding yourself the oldest of the foreign members of the Institute. . . . I have the same feeling—and that in a broader field. Of all the kings and ministers of state in office between 1813 and 1815, the King of Prussia and myself are the only survivors! And yet the time does not embrace more than a quarter of a century—so true is it that twenty-five years are quite an historical epoch. *Let us not lose courage at such trifles, but go on as if they were nothing at all!*"

We should grow more indulgent as we grow older. Age, that acquaints us with infirmities in ourselves, should make us tender in our reprehension of weakness elsewhere. Youth and a narrow experience excuse a censorious spirit, but age and a larger experience teach forbearance.

ALMS-GIVING.

TO street-beggars, even though we may suspect them of being impostors, it is well to give a trifle, if it is only to keep alive the spirit of giving.

ALMS-HOUSES.

THE great objection to poor-houses, as they exist, is the utter degradation they impose upon the unfortunate. An alms-house commissioner, of long standing, told a friend that he had never known a single instance, in all his experience, of a person who had been driven to the necessity of applying for admission into a poor-house rising afterwards by his own efforts to any figure in the world, or even acquiring a decent position in it. Before taking so humiliating a step, he said, they would endure every hardship, and submit to every species of privation; but the dreadful necessity once forced upon them, their spirits seemed to be broken by it, and they appeared to give themselves up from that time to be lost, and to abandon all further effort to retrieve their affairs. What we need, therefore, in lieu of institutions

so degrading, are establishments founded upon a principle similar to that of our noble public schools, and at which the unfortunate can obtain work suited to their several capacities, as a matter of public right, and not relief as a matter of privilege and public charity.

AMBITION.

A LATENT distrust of our immortality lies at the base and is a cause of our ambition. We fear to perish utterly at death, and seek a continuance of life beyond it in the thoughts of men. Indeed, no necessity seems to us so stern as that which constrains us to yield to the thought of being utterly forgotten. To "leave the warm precincts of the cheerful day;" to "lie in cold obstruction;" to surrender "to dumb forgetfulness a prey this pleasing, anxious being;" to "rot, pass, and perish" from the minds of men; to leave behind us no record, no trace, no tradition even, of all that we have thought and felt—this is indeed appalling, and from this we seek escape in the building up of a name that shall be held in honorable remembrance.

An ambition to excel in petty things obstructs the progress to nobler aims. Again:—The pursuit of great, though possibly impracticable ends, has at least this much of utility in it, that it diverts us from being taken up with matters of little consequence. And yet—Ambition, in one respect, is like a singer's voice; pitched at too high a key, it breaks and comes to nothing.

Ambition cares little for persons,—everything for its objects. These it will have, at every cost to those. The severely ambitious man spares not himself; why, he is too apt to feel, should he spare others?

There are two kinds of ambition—that which has a specific object,—the ambition of practical men; and that which is vague and general—the ambition of dreamers.

AMERICANS.

EVERY American should consider himself as an example to all other men, as his country, politically, (its institution of slavery excepted,) is to all other countries.

It is a very tolerable thing to be a German ; it is a very good thing to be a Frenchman ; and even a proud thing to be an Englishman ; but to be an American is honor, glory, rapture,—moderated by the recollection of four millions of slaves.

The Greeks did bravely for art and letters ; the Romans achieved much in the way of military renown ; the English have done nobly in giving to the world Shakespeare, and for constitutional liberty and physical science,—the French for social amenities,—and the Germans for philosophy ;— but what have not the Americans done, and what may they not do—the incubus of slavery once lifted*—for the cause of humanity !

It is not too much to say, that many of the very greatest men within the last hundred years, in the highest departments of greatness, have

* And this is only a question of time. The emancipation of the whites must accompany the emancipation of the blacks in the South. And this revolution, it may be, is already in progress. A taste for freedom, like a taste for blood in certain animals, may long remain in abeyance, but once excited, it grows to an inextinguishable passion.

been Americans. May it not be said, that there has not been, within that period, any purer patriot than Washington;* any greater philosopher than Franklin;† any greater school of statesmen than John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison; any greater natural orator than Patrick Henry; any more accomplished jurists than Marshall and Story; any greater mechanical inventors than John Fitch, Robert Fulton, and Eli Whitney; any greater naturalist, within his department, than Audubon; any more original

* "You are quite right," says M. De Tocqueville, in a letter to a friend, "in putting Washington in the foremost rank of great men. It shows that you understand and love real greatness and real glory. Of how many of my countrymen or contemporaries could I say this? Washington is the product of the society of the times he lived in. We should have thought him flat. We want theatrical virtues, fine speeches, brilliant vices, even audacious ones are enough." — *Memoirs, Letters and Remains of De Tocqueville*, Vol. 2, p. 404. Boston. 1862.

† It is a prevailing impression as to Franklin, that he wanted refinement; but in truth he was too great for the little refinements of society. Of all the characters that America has produced, that of Franklin is the most distinguished for its mingled strength and simplicity. His greatness was homespun, but genuine. Assiduous in the development of his powers, ardent in his devotion to the interests of his state, fearless in his pursuit of scientific truth, and accomplishing the greatest ends by the simplest means, he stands, among the great men of America, distinguished for his greatness, without the pretension that usually accompanies it.

painters than Stuart, Allston, and Cole; any more accomplished sculptors than Greenough and Crawford; any nobler divine than Channing; any greater constitutional lawyer than Daniel Webster;* any greater lexicographers than Webster and Worcester; any more finished miscellaneous writer than Washington Irving;† any more graceful assertion of the proper dignity of the profession of literature than that presented in the pure lives and elevated influence of both Irving and Longfellow; any finer vindication of the poetry of common life than that contained in the "Songs of Labor" of Whittier; any more

* This great personage—so long held to be the colossus of American public men—had perhaps the power of making the strongest arguments of any man of his time. But, the limitation to his greatness was, that he wanted originative power. He never initiated, as far as I am aware, though in public life so many years, any measure or policy of great importance. He wanted also a conscience as great as his intellect. He had the head of Jupiter, with the heart of Pan. A great expounder, in an evil day for his fame, he became also a great compounder.

† Attractive from the graces of his style, the easy flow of his narrative and the skill with which it is conducted, and interesting as well from the subjects treated of, Washington Irving's works have a further and especial charm for his readers in the kindly spirit and genial humor which everywhere pervade them. Of all the books in the world, his are among the very first, so far as they are adapted to tone the mind to better thoughts and purer feelings.

suggestive essayist than Emerson;* any more incisive wit, keen to deal with the subtleties of character, than that of Holmes;† any more learned historians than Prescott, Bancroft, and Motley; any finer writers of fiction than Cooper‡

* I have not been able to decide whether it is best to read certain of Emerson's Essays as poetry or philosophy. Perhaps, though, it would be no more than just to consider them as a close approach to an admirable union of the two. Certainly, no modern writer has more of vivid individuality, both of thought and expression, and few writers, of any age, surpass him in the grand merit of suggestiveness. There is much in his essays that I cannot clearly understand, and passages sometimes occur that once seemed to me destitute of meaning; but I have since learned, from a greater familiarity with what he has written, to respect even his obscurities, and to have faith that there is at all times behind his words both a man and a meaning. "Milton," says Leigh Hunt, the best disposed of English writers to do justice to the enlarging scope of American thought, "speaks of a strain of music, which

'Rose like a steam
Of rich, distilled perfumes,'—

We have always thought," he adds, "that the effect which distinguishes Mr. Emerson's writings from all others is that of an *aroma*—something which is less definable than perceptible, less manifested than felt—something which, to the palpabilities and plain truths of others, is what the fragrance of flowers is to their visible substance."

† My veneration for the past contends here with my love for the present, and bids me make exceptions in favor of Charles Lamb and Sydney Smith. But no, I will make no exceptions. Half praise is no praise.

‡ To the gift of an original genius, Cooper added the glory

and Hawthorne; any more enterprising traveller than Ledyard, or more intelligent explorer than Kane; any name in poetry more likely to endure than that of Bryant;* any more brilliant talker, Coleridge aside, by all accounts, than Margaret Fuller Ossoli — “the best talker since De Staël,” according to Horace Greeley; any more powerful influencer of public opinion through the press than Greeley himself; any greater in-

of devoting it to the conquest of a new domain in literature. His Indian novels are not only absolutely unique in character, but every passing year will add to their value as imperishable ideals of a perishing race. What the Naiads and Dryads, the Fauns and the Satyrs of her old mythology were to the woods and streams of Greece, the Indian characters of Cooper are to the forests and streams of America. Under the spell of his genius, shadows of dusky warriors still glide through leafy glades, or urge their light canoes across her waters, and visions of brown maidens — gentle sisters of savage brothers — still flit in the light of their wigwam fires, across the night that has so strangely descended upon their race.

* If asked to indicate which poem of the age best deserves to endure, I should be tempted to name Bryant's “Forest Hymn.” In this noble poem, as in his “Thanatopsis,” “The Prairie,” “An Evening Reverie,” and others, Bryant, among living poets, is preëminently the poet of nature and humanity. The poet of freedom, too, certain of his lines are more than the equivalent of ten thousand battle-axes on the side of liberty. Never descending to mere prettinesses of thought or expression, and, still more, never merging the man in the poet, Bryant is also an efficient man of affairs. The brawn of a strong manhood is visible in his life, as well as in his verse.

ventor than Morse; any more important additions to agricultural processes than those of American discoverers;* any more signal contribution to the interests of industry than that of the originators of the sewing-machine; or any nobler boon to humanity than that conferred by the American discoverers of the anæsthetic properties of ether!

American Enterprise—It has been well said

* At a trial of threshing machines at Paris in 1855, six men, in one hour, threshed sixty litres of wheat. In the same time

Pitt's American machine	threshed	740	litres,
Clayton's English	"	410	"
Duvoir's French	"	250	"
Penet's	"	150	"

About the same time a trial of reaping and mowing machines took place under the direction of the Paris Industrial Exhibition. Three machines were entered, one American, one English, and a third from Algiers, each having about one acre of oats to cut, all at the same time raking as well as cutting, and the American machine did its work in twenty-two minutes, the English in sixty-six, the Algerian in seventy-two.

The superiority of American machines was so obvious that the contest was finally narrowed down to two, both American, and these were afterwards converted from reapers into mowers, one making the change in one minute, the other in twenty. Both performed their task to the astonishment and satisfaction of a large concourse of spectators, and the jurors themselves could not restrain their enthusiasm. "All the laurels," said a French journal, "were gloriously won by Americans."

that "there is but one idea which the American mind cannot readily comprehend—that of tranquillity." But tranquillity, in its extreme sense, is allied to stagnation, and stagnation to death. There is a greater virtue than the virtue of standing still—a greater law than the law of rest—the law of motion. The Americans know better than to fall asleep when there is work to be done. While alive, be alive! Use your advantages honorably, but use them! they in effect hold. Alertness is their national characteristic: and it is so, first, because efficiency everywhere among them commands its price and is sure of its reward; and next, because they wisely seek for happiness where it is most to be found, in occupations that interest and engross the energies.

American Manners—The *bizarre* is wanting in American life and manners. The dearth of odd, striking, quaint, and fantastic customs and characters is something that the observer and the humorist, fond of noting the curious in mind and manners, must feel. By these, and not without reason, the eccentric are regarded as among the most valuable members of society; as, where they abound, life has the variety and

interest of a masquerade, and the excitement of a carnival.

Office-Seeking in the United States: a Distinctive Feature of, and a Peculiar Profession in, American Society—Every American that dies short of the Presidency of the United States, dies the broken hope of a great possibility. A fine provision this, by which the political lists are thrown open to all comers, but one necessarily leading to peculiar evils: to party machinations, to intensity of partisan bitterness, to panderings to popular prejudice, to, more than all, the growth of a class accustomed to look for support from the government, rather than from their individual enterprise. Especially, too, the great number of offices, and the facilities for acquiring them, in a democratic state, induce at intervals an indecent scramble for offices, from which the men of superior worth, after a season, are apt to retire in disgust, leaving the field to be occupied by the less worthy and the more importunate.

It is with applicants for office as with other mendicants: when they press forward in crowds

for the bounty of the state, the more deserving are to be found, not in the front ranks, but behind them, where a sense of decency, or of self-respect, to which the others are insensible, has kept them. "Be not of the mind," said Sir Philip Sidney, "to make suitors magistrates: the unwilling worthy man is fitter to rule than the undeserving desirer."

American Scholarship—Ripe scholarship, too, is a rare thing in America. The restless spirit which distinguishes my countrymen, and the conditions which lead them so early into, and that keep them so largely employed within, the spheres of practical endeavor and material enterprise, are opposed to that high and complete culture of which so many instances exist among the Germans. "Nothing," says William Humboldt, in one of his letters to his friend Forster, "nothing on earth is so important as the highest power and most varied cultivation of the individual; and, therefore, the primary law of true morality is, educate yourself, and the second, influence others by what you are." This sentiment, it must be conceded, has yet to find a home in American appreciation. An Ame-

ican seeks to influence others only through what he accomplishes, and is disposed to hold any severe devotion to study in mature years as a "wasting of time in strenuous idleness" — in this overlooking the important consideration, that, before he can achieve more than an ordinary work, he must first become more than an ordinary man.

Americans Socially — In our comparatively new country there is so much work to be done, that for the present we can do little more than rough-hew our purposes, leaving the task of finishing as an after-process. And thus it happens, that even in our social world, much less regard is paid to quality than to quantity. The question in American circles is, not so much what kind of a figure does a gentleman present, but, how much of a figure? In all things the "big figure" is in the highest esteem. Here, too, as elsewhere, it is forgotten that the truest worth is to be found in the private walks of life, and that public men, ardently seeking the advancement of their hopes or projects, naturally fall into selfish ways, both of thought and action. A caucus of politicians can make

a governor or president, but God alone can make a man. But Americans forget this. Instead of rating men by their intrinsic personal worth, they estimate them, as they are elsewhere rated, according to their position, fortune, or employment, or something else equally secondary.

Slavery as an Element in American Society—An ancient French writer, in treating of the incorporation of certain boroughs by Louis the Gross, in order to free the people from slavery under the lords, and to give them protection by means of certain privileges and a separate jurisdiction, denounces the measure as “a new and wicked device to procure liberty to slaves, and encourage them in shaking off the dominion of their masters.” How like this is the language of some of our modern politicians! Like them, this fellow evidently considered the system of villenage, or slavery, as it then existed, as a great public blessing. But, the negative of a good cannot be also a good. If freedom is a blessing, that which is, in its nature and incidents, its opposite, cannot be otherwise than an evil. Through slavery the South has lost its civ-

ilization. Beyond this, I will not trust myself to say how great an evil I regard that to be, which is, to my country at large, calamity at home and dishonor abroad.* Rather let me commend to my countrymen of the South, in all their fulness of meaning, these words of Walter Savage Landor:—" 'Tis a dire calamity to have a slave; it is an inexpiable curse to be one."

The American Political System—Particular events may occur to overthrow any government, but the general, and ultimately inevitable, tendency of things is not the less to establish and perpetuate the democratic form.

Free minds make free governments. Radically, there are but two forms of government—the despotic and the democratic; the first adapted to the imperfect stages of society, and the other to its more advanced conditions. Of these forms all others are but modifications, and they

* Haply, the caviller at American character and institutions resembles a mastiff barking at a passing railway train;—scarcely is the voice of the petulant critic heard, before the subject of his criticism has left him far behind, or without an object for his criticism.

partake of the one or the other, according to the worth and intelligence, or the ignorance or want of spirit, of the people they represent.

Absolutism is one man's aggrandizement, and all men's abasement.

A constitutional monarchy represents neither king nor people, but a series of abstractions. With its system of checks and balances, it occupies at one time a position of antagonism to the king, and at another to the people; and it is at all times in danger of suffering from the open or disguised hostility of both of the great parties whose power it seeks to hold in check. It was thus with the *doctrinaire* government of M. Guizot. M. Guizot fell through governing in behalf of a theory. Unfortunately for him, the people required him to govern for them, to which he was too little inclined, since the people formed too small a part of his theory. In the overthrow of his government — measurably liberal as it was — we have seen foreshadowed the doom, in the more or less remote future, of all governments not founded in the regards,

established for the benefit, and administered exclusively in the interests, of the people.

The difference in character between a despotic and a liberal government was pointedly indicated in a remark of an intelligent friend of mine, a German. Speaking of the political institutions of a portion of Germany, he said, "There, everything that is not expressly permitted, is prohibited; while in the United States, everything that is not expressly prohibited, is permitted."

If the cost of elections, however, is taken into account, the government of the United States is the most expensive in the world; but then the benefits it has conferred have been proportionably greater—except to the four millions of slaves.

Between the form of government and the condition of society in the United States, also, there is this antagonism: the government is democratic in most of its features, but it is erected over and built upon a social organization, in the North imperfectly adapted to it, and

in the South inconsistent with it,—a social organization which received its characteristic form and elements in periods and under institutions widely different. A government thus established is necessarily restricted in its operations, and, to a great extent, thwarted of its ends.*

AMUSEMENTS.

MUCH of the character of a people is determined by that of their amusements. As has been said of their songs, so of their pleasures. Give to the wise to form the entertainments of a people, and you may safely leave to statesmen the lesser office of forming the laws which shall govern them.

* It will be recollected that this is a book of general principles, and that it is out of its province, therefore, except in the way of illustration, to treat of passing events, however important or interesting. I will, however, here observe, in regard to the late withdrawal of Slave States from the American Union,—a natural result of an unnatural alliance between incompatible elements,—that if it had been allowed by the North, and been followed by the permitted withdrawal of the remaining Slave States, it would have constituted for the Free States the happiest circumstance in their history, as it would then have left them competent to form a government more powerful at home, and far more honored abroad, than that which previously existed.

ANECDOTES.

ANECDOTES pointedly illustrate a subject: and yet they have been largely excluded from historical literature as beneath its dignity. Pshaw! Histories tend to anecdotes, as truths to axioms, as their final forms. Anecdotes are the best parts of history, as they are of biographies, books of travel, and a good many other books. Without them, reasoning is cold, and remonstrance less effectual. They fortify truth, and enforce its suggestions. For illustration: if I wished to convince a fair friend, who is a little intemperate upon the subject of woman's rights, that the condition of her sex here, although doubtless admitting of improvement, is still infinitely superior to that of women in some other parts of the world, how could I better do it than by quoting the observation of a writer, that "the cannibal chiefs of Fejee regard the poor women of their districts as a farmer does the inmates of a well-filled sty," and by adding the anecdote which he mentions in illustration of it? "Ti Suliar (the chief of Sassalassa, one of the Fejee Islands) sold a woman to a white man for a wife, and

when she was returned as not suiting the purchaser, he coolly remarked, 'She's good to eat, anyhow,' and ordered her to be baked forthwith."

Figures — Anecdotes — Figures are preferable to anecdotes as permanent illustrations of truth, as they will better bear repetition. But the evil of a passion for metaphor, as Leigh Hunt observes, is that "it tempts a writer to sacrifice truths to images." * As tin by moonlight has the effulgence of silver, so also commonplace thoughts, figuratively expressed, deceive the unwary into an over-estimate of their worth.

APHORISMS.

ASIDE from the ideas expressed in aphorisms, they are deserving of the attention of the curious in letters from the infinite variety of peculiarities of style they exhibit. "If you don't want to be tossed by a bull — toss the bull." Here, for instance, the thought is

* "Similies are like songs in love,
They much describe, they nothing prove,"

says Prior.

not only spirited, but it is so rendered as to give to the idea both the force of novelty and the agreeableness of wit. The words are as hard and as compact, and the thought flies as swiftly, as a bullet.

APPEARANCES.

HALF the pleasure in life comes from the appearances of persons and things about us. It is, therefore, as well a form of benevolence, as a matter of interest, to study appearances.

Nature, in endowing some men with the gifts of mind, seems to have quite forgotten to add the graces of person, in this resembling capricious fortune, which sometimes gives to the kingly spirit the beggar's portion.

Judging too much from personal appearance, we underrate the worth and capacity of the ill-favored, overlooking what Bacon observes, that "whoever hath anything in his person that induces contempt, has a perpetual spur in him to rescue himself from scorn."

Though "fearfully and wonderfully" ill-looking, a resolute man has still this path of safety open to him. Let him boldly urge it as a distinction. Let him champion his homeliness, and claim preëminence for it against all comers. Or, far better, let him hold, with Sir Thomas Browne, that "there is a general beauty in the works of nature," and that "there is no deformity but in monstrosity, wherein, notwithstanding, there is a kind of beauty, nature so ingeniously contriving the irregular parts, as they become sometimes more remarkable than the principal fabric."

First Appearances—It is a bad sign when an orator or an actor is able to make his first appearance upon the stage, or in the forum, without trepidation, or extreme sensibility as to the result. Such a one will be pretty sure to escape an egregious failure, but he will as certainly fail to achieve any very brilliant success. Excessive sensibility may be overcome, but a lack of it involves a graver difficulty, that can never be remedied.

APPLAUSE.

NOBLE acts deserve a generous recognition. Indeed, it is a species of injustice not to warmly applaud whatever is wisely said or ably done. Fine things are shown that they may be admired. When the peacock struts, it is to show what a fine tail he has. "Honor," says Aristotle, "is in him that honors."

The genial optimist who praises much scatters flowers in our way. Grant that he over-praises, or that he applauds where he might condemn, still he makes — no mean result — the world to appear better than it is. A pleasant illusion is better than a harsh reality.

It is a thing to be grateful to God for, that he has made the practical results of our love of applause to consist so largely in rendering benefits. Genius itself, seeking a recognition of its claims in the exercise of its highest powers, labors for all, and becomes thereby, in a sense by no means limited, the servant of all.

APPRECIATION.

MUCH of the sweetness of being beloved comes from the feeling that we are appreciated.

It is not half so difficult to be witty or philosophical with a friend after we have once played the part of a humorist or a sage with him. Our wit and wisdom flow out to him after we have discovered that he is appreciative of them.

Appreciation unfolds qualities else dormant. Intimacy develops love. Put almost any two persons together, at a sufficiently early age, and let them live isolated from the rest of the world, and they will be almost certain to love each other. It is the habit of living among numbers, and of comparing one with another, that makes us so invidiously critical.

It is a sad habit of an over-critical mind to hesitate too much in awarding a meed of ardent admiration to beauty or worth. Even when surprised into astonishment by some appari-

tion of beauty—some sweet face, we will say, radiant as the morning, or some

“Maiden with the meek brown eyes,
In whose orb a shadow lies
Like the dusk of evening skies”—*

instead of loyally accepting and standing by the immediate impression of surpassing loveliness; instead of being ready at once to make affidavit that the beauty before him is absolute, and “a joy for ever,” he hesitates, distrusts it, and even begins a curious scrutiny to see if he cannot discover some flaw in it—freckles in the complexion, a pimple on the chin, or something awry about the nose. Fie, fie, upon such an appreciation of the beautiful!

There are some things best contemplated in silence. Their proportions are so vast that speech cannot get around them. Beside them, eloquence loses its tongue, feeling chokes expression, and words seem an impertinence, like the talk of a trifler in the stillness of a mountain-top, or in the hush of the woods. The power of God is in them, and the finite powers

* Longfellow.

of human capacity are rebuked by them into silence.

APTITUDES.

TWO things especially concern us: that we discover wherein we are strongest and weakest, to the end that we may follow in the direction of our aptitudes, or escape from the fatal chances which have led us into un congenial employments.

That is the work for which we are best fitted to which we go joyously, like a bridegroom to his bride. The hand that loves its work does it well.

ARGUMENTS.

IT is rather the mark of a second-rate capacity to excel in argument. With the higher class of minds, vivid intuitions of truth dispense with the necessity of tracing it through severe and laborious processes of ratiocination.

ARROGANCE.

ARROGANCE gives a greater and more lasting offence than even fraud or violence, for these attack only our interest, while that wounds our pride.

ART AND ARTISTS.

IN art there are two principal schools between which each aspirant has to choose—one distinguished by its close adherence to nature, and the other by its strenuous efforts to get above it. The first is the school of nature; the last, the school of naturals. In the first, natural tones and colors, and shapes and properties, are sought to be united in certain harmonious combinations—natural means being everywhere employed to a natural end; but in the latter, the truth and simplicity of nature are as constantly sacrificed to the inferior objects of producing striking effects, or stimulating wonder.

Conditions of Excellence in Art—For his art, as well as his soul's sake, an artist must rise

above the inferior affections. How can his conceptions be pure, or his ideals noble, who is sordid in thought, or gross in feeling? Bluntly, an artist must be an honest man. He cannot continue elevated in his aims, who is less than honorable in his life.

Excellence in art is largely the result of attention to minutiae, and — prayer. "Wishes are prayers," it has been said: to which let me add, that only earnest workers pray effectually. Look upon this statue, of faultless grace; living, yet without life! Here are the sculptor's prayers, harmonized, crystallized, into enduring beauty. Every stroke of his chisel was a prayer. Look again at these pictures; at that radiant Madonna, or this luminous face of the infant Jesus — the soul of Beauty looking out of the features of a child; and tell me, do you not read here, too, the prayers of the artist? Yes, every stroke of his brush was a prayer, as every line of the writer's pen, and every effort of human skill must be, to ensure such or kindred results.

Absolute truth to nature, even if it were

possible, is not indispensable in a picture or description. The charm of both is, that they address the imagination, and the imagination is not addressed where everything is described and nothing is left to it.

Perhaps natural scenes are best described, and, it may be, painted, from sketches, after an interval, and from a distance, when the lapse of time has invested them with a more poetical interest, and the view is not distracted by petty details. Thus, it may be remembered, Washington Irving's delightful legend of "Sleepy Hollow," with its charming touches of description, was written, not, as one would suppose, in a situation of rural retirement, but in the heart of London. "Walking with his brother," says Frederick Saunders, "one dull, foggy Sunday, over Westminster Bridge, he got to telling the old Dutch stories which he had heard at Tarrytown in his youth, when the thought suddenly struck him: 'I have it! I'll go home and make memoranda of these for a book.' And leaving his brother to go to church, he went back to his lodgings and jotted down all the data; and the next day—the dullest and

darkest of London fogs—he sat in his little room and wrote out ‘Sleepy Hollow’ by the light of a candle.”

Excess of Art—In many things do we not suffer from too much art? In our houses, in our manners, in our modes of speech, everywhere, do we not see it taking the place of and crowding out nature and simplicity? In truth, very many things that are made the subjects of art were better left in their natural conditions. A woman who determines beforehand in what manner she will receive an expected proposal for her hand, and how she will reply to it—conning perhaps a little speech for the occasion—scarcely commits a greater mistake than is often made, in more imposing matters, when the real is abandoned for the meretricious.

Facility in Art—An artist who achieves a few good works is more to be admired than another who produces ever so many indifferent. Excellence first, facility afterwards. To begin with facility as the aim, is to end in imbecility as the performance. It is indeed well with the artist when he appreciates at the outset that

there is, in Charles Sumner's phrase, "austere work to be done." He must cultivate a sublime patience. Content to work out his results slowly and well, the artist must labor on in the spirit of a devotee, and, if needs be, in that of a martyr.

Artist's Ideals—Perhaps it is even true of all who accomplish distinction in art, that they can more easily satisfy the requirements of foreign tastes than the severer demands of their own more exacting ideals. Indeed, perfection to the artist, like the horizon to the voyager, no matter what progress he makes towards it, is ever still afar off.

Artists' Jealousies—A reputation for transcendent excellence in any art is seldom acquired in the first instance from brother-artists of equal pretensions. After a great and successful achievement, the artist who looks around him to find among these a concession of his superiority, may only discover that it is this very concession from which they are most anxious to escape.

Methods in Art—Perhaps the difference between a superior and an inferior artist is as much one of process as of natural genius. Superior methods command superior results. An artist must go directly to nature for his inspiration, and not accept it at second-hand. He must study and copy nature's self, and not a dim reflection of nature in his own consciousness. Next—he must be thorough. His process must be analogous to that of the English artist in the admirable story told to illustrate the difference between the French, the German, and the English mind. It is not enough that he paints his camel, like the Frenchman, as he finds it in some *Jardin des Plantes*, "as large as life and twice as natural;" he must not, like the German, sit down to evolve the camel out of the depths of his moral consciousness; but, like the brave Englishman, he must go to the home of the camel—the desert—and paint it as he finds it there, in a state of nature, with its natural surroundings—the arid sands expanding away to the horizon, and the hot, fierce eye of the sun glaring upon its desolation.

Origin of Art—The first production of art

was possibly a club; the first artist using his brains for the first time to devise an efficient instrument for knocking out his neighbor's.

Resources of Art—Will it not fare ill with authors, artists, inventors, and men of science, by and by, when not a cause is left unexplored, not a thought, or feeling, or fancy left unexpressed, not a scene left undescribed or unpainted, and all possible combinations of all things for the production of new effects exhausted? Truly, this is but an idle fancy. Consider how difficult it is to reach the last possible combination of any few of even the simplest materials. And has not nature been at work thousands of years without producing as yet any two individuals in all respects similar?

Subjects of Art—Artists and authors err as often in the choice of their subjects as in the treatment of them—forgetting that no production of the pen or pencil can excite genuine interest which is without attraction in itself.

“It is worse than a crime, it is a blunder,” for an artist to paint battle-scenes. They are

a perversion of art. Painting should address the sense of the beautiful. What of beauty is there in the representation of a number of men shooting and hacking each other to pieces! Such a spectacle is only calculated to gratify the tastes of a wild beast. The true lover of art is ever a lover of humanity.

The artist's business is with the beautiful. The repugnant is outside of his province. Let him study only the beautiful, and he will always be pleased;* let him treat only of the beautiful, with a true feeling for it, and he will always give pleasure.

The artist must love both his art and the subjects of his art. Nothing that is not lovable is worth portraying. In the portrait of Rosa

* "When I recall some of our walks under the Villa Borghese," said Washington Allston to Mrs. Jameson, speaking of Coleridge, "I am almost tempted to dream that I had once listened to Plato in the groves of the Academy. It was there that he taught me this golden rule, 'never to judge of a work of art by its defects;' a rule as wise as benevolent, and one which, while it has spared me much pain, has widened my sphere of pleasure." Mrs. Jameson adds, after recording this remembrance of the painter: "Notwithstanding his sensitive taste, Allston remained to the end of his life a 'wide liker,' to use his own expression."

Bonheur, by Edward Dubufe, she is appropriately represented with one arm thrown affectionately around the neck of a bull. She must have loved this order of animals to have painted them so well.

Uses and Ultimate Triumphs of Art—The fine arts elevate and dignify life; the useful arts confirm and extend its happiness. Therefore, the beautiful in painting, in sculpture, or in architecture, and the ingenious products of the mechanic arts, are to be viewed with kindred feelings. These bespeak the power of genius; those the achievements of skilful and industrious hands. The fruits of an advanced civilization, both are of a nature to make us feel the dignity of our manhood, and to exult in them as so many triumphs over the limitations affixed to our original condition. These forms of beauty and utility, too, had we but our rights, were the property, as in the end they are destined to be, of all who have the energy to labor for them. Were their toils equally divided among men, it has been computed, three hours' work per day would amply suffice to secure to every one all the necessaries, and most

of the luxuries, of life. When, in some happier age, the mode of thus equalizing labor and its fruits is discovered, then the glories of art, and the appliances of luxurious living, will be found in every household.*

AUDACITY.

NO man is greatly competent to serve the cause of truth, till he has made audacity a part of his mental constitution.

Causes, in court and out of it, are won as Hudibras says honor is —

"Honor is, like a widow, won
By brisk attempts and putting on."

* "Without painting, sculpture, music, poetry, and the emotions produced by natural beauty," says Herbert Spencer, "life would lose half its charm." And he adds, "We believe the time will come when they will occupy a much larger share of human life. When the forces of nature have been fully conquered, — when the means of production have been brought to perfection, — when labor has been economized to the highest degree, — when education has been so systematized that a preparation for the more essential activities may be made with comparative rapidity, — and when, consequently, there is a great increase of leisure, — then will poetry, both of art and nature, rightly fill a larger space in the world's esteem."

AUTHORS.

INSTEAD of the jealousies that obtain among them, there is no class that ought to stand so close together, united in a feeling of common brotherhood, to strengthen, to support, and to encourage each other, by mutual sympathy and interchange of genial criticism, as authors. A sensitive race, neglect pierces like sharp steel into the very quick of their being. And still they stand apart! Alive to praise, and needing its inspiration, their relations are those of icebergs — rigid, lofty, and freezing. What infatuation is this! They should seek each other out, extend the hand of fellowship, and bridge the distance between them by elaborate courtesies and kindly recognitions.

A high authority has said, that “a nation’s chief glory arises from its authors;” but unhappily, while honored outside of their own circle, within it a spirit of jealousy and alienation is suffered to disturb the harmony, and to impair the fortunes of its members. Sir Joshua Reynolds is said to have observed, that he would allow all the world to be competent

judges of his pictures except painters. A similar remark, applicable to their books and literary brethren, might, with equal justice, be made by many able writers—a natural result of their isolation, and of the absence of habits of friendly intercourse between them. Literary men, then, owe it to their best interests to stand by each other, to make common cause in behalf of common interests, and to be more friendly and genial in their relations. They are about the only great class destitute of a proper *esprit de corps*, and whose members thus far have resisted that tendency to association necessary for the promotion of mutual interests.*

Appearance and Address of Authors—"One may not be truly a great painter and a little man," says A. G. Remington. A like observation, applicable to authors, would be equally true. And yet, I have seen enough of authors

* Among the results—injurious alike to literature and the interests of literary men—flowing from the want of a coöperative spirit among authors, is the absence of a judicious English and American international copyright law. Combined, more effectually than hitherto, in that behalf, and aided by the intrinsic justice of their cause, it is scarcely to be supposed that the literary minds of both countries would not be adequate to the accomplishment of such a measure.

to know that they are not very much more brilliant, or more remarkable, in their personal presence, carriage, conversation, or conduct, than the average of cultivated men. What is good in them lies not so much upon the surface, but is to be divined from what they have written. The best part of an author is in his books.

Conversation and Style of Authors—There is often a striking contrast between an author's style of writing and his style of talking. He ponders what he writes; he talks without system. As a writer, therefore, he is sententious; as a conversationist, loose and verbose. Or the converse of all this may be true.

An Author's First Book—No one is a competent judge of what he himself does. An author, on the eve of his first publication, and while his book is going through the press, is in a predicament like that of a man mounted on a fence, with a mad bull in the field he is obliged to cross. The apprehended silence of the press concerning his merits—for no notice is the worst notice—constitutes one of the "horns of his dilemma," while their possibly

invidious comments upon his want of merit constitute another and equally formidable "horn." Between these, and the uncertainty as to whether he will not in a little time be cut by one half of his acquaintances, and only indulgently tolerated by the other half, his experience is apt to be quite peculiar, and certainly not altogether agreeable. Never envy, therefore, an author his feelings on such an occasion, on the score of superior enjoyment, but rather let him be visited with your softest pity and tenderest commiseration.

Literary Manliness—Fielding, in the dedication of his "History of Tom Jones," tells his reader that he has employed upon it "all the wit and humor of which he is master." This was manly, and in fine contrast with the usual practice of authors, artists, and men in general, in speaking of what they have done. They would have us to understand that they have only put forth half their strength, and could have done much better, "an' they would;" as if, forsooth, for a man to do less than his best in any important enterprise is not more discreditable than even to fail after a thorough

exertion of all his resources. "I have made the most of the stuff that was in me," said Jean Paul, towards the close of his career, and the acknowledgment was as manly as the fact it commemorates was honorable.

Authors of Novelties — The authors of new systems, new theories, and new truths, should not be too sanguine of an immediate acceptance of their novelties, but should rather borrow, being themselves only lesser luminaries, a lesson of patience from those remoter stars whose light is said to have been thousands of years in coming down to us.

Literary Self-Consciousness — An actor who cannot forget his audience will never enchant it. And so of authors. A book that is not written in forgetfulness of the public, is not likely to be worthy of it. The first condition of a writer's success is, to keep his mind free from a too anxious hope or fear about it. He must abandon himself to his genius, or be abandoned by it. Perfect success is only to be achieved through perfect liberty.

"*The Tenth Muse*" — Authors, as well as artists, work more effectively when, to the force of a natural proclivity, there is added the effect of an engagement to tax their best energies. They are then no longer dreamers, brooding over ideals, but athletes, regularly entered for a race that demands the brawn and stamina of their sturdiest manhood. What the ancients fabled the Muses to be — the quickeners and inspirers of genius — a liberal publisher and a munificent purchaser are in letters and in art. Perhaps Shakspeare's invocation to his mistress, in his thirty-eighth sonnet, will answer just as well for an author to his publisher.

"Be thou the tenth muse, ten times more in worth
Than those old nine, which rhymers invoke;
And he that calls on thee, let him bring forth
Eternal numbers to outlive long date.
If my slight muse do please these curious days,
The pain be mine, but thine shall be the praise."

Ultimate Fate of Authors — There is probably no hell for authors in the next world — they suffer so much from critics and publishers in this.



BACHELORS.

"Gather the rose of love, while yet is time." — SPENSER.

A CONFIRMED bachelor from choice, peradventure, is one whose stock of love, sympathy, and affection is so small that he cannot afford to share it with another, but must e'en keep it all to himself.

Of the Natural Right of a Bachelor to be a Bachelor — It is a sheer assumption of the bachelor that he has a right to dispose of himself otherwise than in marriage. He has no right to defeat the evident intentions of nature; no right to indulge his own caprice at the expense of another's happiness. Men and women, like the two shells of an oyster, were created each for the other.

Touching the Expediency of a Surrender at Discretion — The witty Selden likened a timid

bachelor to the frog in *Æsop*, who wouldn't jump into the well because he couldn't jump out again. But, had the frog jumped in, he would, at least, have "jumped to a conclusion," and, failing to satisfy his yearnings, he would have gained by resolving his doubts. He was not happy without, and he could not have been more than unhappy within.

Duplicity of Bachelors in Pretending to be Otherwise than Miserable—It is one of the most curious things in nature that a bachelor cannot at once be recognized among a crowd of men by his haggard looks, his evident misery, and an expression of fixed despair in his countenance. We know that he must be miserable; that no man's happiness is ever complete until he has some one to share it; that the nearest approach a bachelor ever makes to happiness is when he dreams that he is married. And yet the creature affects to be gay, to have spirits, and to wear a look of enjoyment. As if we did not know that these are all assumed, and that he is really at heart the most wretched of beings. There are people in the world who seem to thrive on poisons; whose appearance is

even improved by the use of arsenic. Between these and the bachelor, living in lonely isolation, but still able to wear a holiday-face, there is a lively resemblance.

What a Bachelor Most Needs—A bachelor suffers from nothing so much as the want of good advice, or from not acting upon it when given. He needs, more than anything else, some considerate friend, with discretion enough to advise him to marry, and with influence enough to induce him to comply with so generous a suggestion. Let him believe me, a man's happiness is never so secure as when it is judiciously intrusted to a woman's keeping.

BEAUTY.

WEAVE all beautiful things into the thoughts. All beautiful things dignify and ennoble life. To cultivate the sense of the beautiful, is but one, and the most effectual, of the ways of cultivating an appreciation of the Creator's benignity.*

* "The reward of the cultivation of the beautiful," says Leigh Hunt, "is the enrichment of the sight wherever it

Beauty and Distinction—Beauty can afford to laugh at distinctions: it is itself the greatest distinction.

(*Feminine Beauty*—The beauty of woman transcends all other forms of beauty, as well in the sweetness of its suggestions, as in the fervor of the admiration it awakens. The beauty of a lovely woman is an inspiration, a sweet delirium, a gentle madness. Her looks are love-potions. Heaven itself is never so clearly revealed to us as in the face of a beautiful woman.

| It is indeed a misfortune for a woman to be without beauty, as with men the eye is the chief arbiter of qualities in the sex. Her beauty is her capital—her worth in the market matrimonial depends upon it. With her the Virtues are less revered when unaccompanied by the Graces. The sex understand this very well; and hence they seek mainly to

turns (for there is some beauty of proportion, or of relation or of light and shade, everywhere), and the enrichment of the soul by the relation of the visible to the invisible, or form to sentiment, its endless analogies, and divine exaltations."

make captive the eye, knowing the mind and heart will follow as a matter of course. Madame De Staël, when her reputation was at its zenith, is said to have remarked that she would cheerfully exchange all that her genius had won for her, for a share of that beauty which she so much envied in others of her sex.

Manly and Feminine Beauty— Grace increases as refinement progresses; and among the remote advantages that may be expected to flow from the spread of intelligence, especially from the laws of health becoming more generally understood and observed, is an indefinite increase of manly beauty and feminine loveliness. At present, either from voluntary or enforced departures from these laws, comeliness is the exception, where it might be, and probably will become, the rule. Among the poor, extreme beauty is far more rare than among the fortunately circumstanced—from their being necessarily more exposed to causes that pervert or arrest its growth. A strong case, but not the less pertinent on that account to show the influence of particular habits of life upon the appearance, and how grievously the evident designs of

nature in this respect may be defeated, is presented in one of Horace Greeley's letters from abroad, in which he tells us that the appearance of many of the women of Savoy, accustomed to labor in the fields, is absolutely revolting.

The Beard as a Part of Manly Beauty — We at times give ourselves a great deal of trouble to defeat the obvious intentions of nature, but usually to our injury, as in shaving, for instance. In Trumbull's picture of the Declaration of American Independence, there is not visible, in the noble group of patriots there represented, a single mustache or imperial, or even a pair of whiskers. The Chinese shave their heads; and these wise men doubtless appreciated the absurdity of the custom, while they committed the even greater absurdity of shaving their beards, and were doubtless punished for it by severe colds. "Why don't you shave off that mustache?" said Bareface to my friend C. "Why don't you shave off your eyebrows?" was the quick reply. Besides its positive utility as a filterer of the air that passes to the lungs, and as a protection to the throat, the beard is a part of manly beauty,

and cannot be dispensed with without injury to the personal appearance. So well are the Spanish damsels convinced of this, that they have it, it is said, for a proverb, that "a mustache is to a kiss what salt is to an egg."

Beauty and Purity—Always with the idea of rare purity is associated in our minds the idea of exceeding beauty. Happening to observe one day, that if there was one of the children of Earth over whom the angels, the children of Heaven, might be expected to watch, it was over the slumbers of a sinless and beautiful girl: "And why not over those of a homely girl?" suggested a friend. I could not so well conceive it.

Beauty on the Wane—Beauty, when it first discloses the mellowing touches of age, affects us painfully. It is like the tints of sunset, or the beauty of autumn—a melancholy beauty—beauty in decline—upon which we cannot gaze without a feeling of sadness—of sadness that it is passing away.

Beauty and Worth—Beauty has the more

ardent, but worth the more discriminating, lovers.

BENEFITS.

IT argues a sweet and noble character to love and befriend the beautiful and the good, the graceful and the fortunate; but a diviner benignity is in loving and befriending such as have not these advantages.

BEREAVEMENTS.

THE heart is never so susceptible to elevated impressions as after a great bereavement, which, by unsettling old hopes and old purposes, and the feelings connected with them, opens the mind to all ennobling influences. And thus, a loss to the affections is a gain to the soul.

THE BEST.

WHEN we have the means to pay for what we desire, what we get is not so much what is best, as what is costliest. Instead of this, one should endeavor, as far as possible, to have everything the best of its kind; to

read the best books, to make choice of the most genial companions, to hear the ablest speakers, to see the finest pictures, to attend the best plays, to hear the sweetest music, to grow the finest fruit, and to cultivate the most beautiful and fragrant flowers. To compass these higher pleasures requires not so much an enlarged expenditure of time, money, or trouble, as a purpose never to put up with an inferior gratification when an enjoyment of a higher strain is equally within the reach.

BIRTH.

AS the sculptor's thought, expressed in marble, appears to the best advantage when exhibited against a dark background, so merit, in one who cannot boast of being "the tenth transmitter of a foolish face," appears the more conspicuous when contrasted with the obscurity of his origin. But this we sometimes forget, as is shown in what happened on an occasion to an acquaintance. "M.," said he, one day, to a distinguished Professor—speaking of one against whom he had a grudge—"M., that man must have had a tailor among his

ancestors."—"A tailor," echoed the Professor, "how is that?"—"Why," replied the other, "there is something in the spirit and manner of a tailor that sticks to his family for two or three generations. Don't you think so?"—"Oh, yes," said the Professor, "I know it, and no one has reason to know it better, for my father was a tailor." His querist immediately commenced talking very fast on another subject, and never stopped for twenty minutes.

BOASTERS.

THEY contemned are much given to boasting: they feel that their position is equivocal, and brag to make it less so.

BOLDNESS.

WE make way for the man who boldly pushes past us.

BOOKS.

WELL may Wordsworth call books "a substantial world," since they augment

so much our resources, add so largely to our power, administer so vastly to our entertainment, increase and vary so much our store of information, and furnish so many pleasing subjects of study and contemplation. They lift us "out of the dirt, as it were," as Grattan said of poetry. Without them the past would be as a blank, the present as a pageant that passes by and is forgotten. They chronicle the aggregate experience of the world, what it has done and felt and suffered. They connect one age with another; they establish a sympathy between the present and the remote past; by them the voice of instruction comes down to us through the long lapse of time; the tongues of the ancient wise speak in them.

And these are only a few of their results. Books are embalmed minds. They make the great of other days our present teachers. Through books we look, as through "a glass darkly," upon those vast multitudes whose bodies have passed to dust, and form the earth we tread upon, and through them we, in our turn, shall be made known to coming time. To the careworn they impart relief from their cares, to the stricken heart they give forgetfulness of its

griefs, and for those whose "paths are in pleasant places" they make those paths more pleasant. Well indeed, I repeat, may Wordsworth call books "a substantial world."

It is almost an impertinence for a young man to publish a book, and usually an error in an old man to have published two. At least, no author should enter upon a second work of importance until he has completed the first to the utmost of his ability. If it is a distinction to have written a good book, it is also a disgrace to have written a bad one. A book should be as perfect as it is possible to make it. It should be beyond the development of youth, and equal to that of the highest maturity.* It should quite exhaust the capacity

* This thought has been ably elaborated by the author of "Recreations of a Country Parson." "Judicious people," says the thoughtful writer, "will not value very highly the crude fruit which has been forced to a certain ripeness before its time. Let us have the mature thing. Give us intellectual beef, rather than intellectual veal. In the domain of poetry, great things have occasionally been done at a very early age; for you do not insist upon sound and judicious views of life in poetry. For plain sense, and practical guidance, you go elsewhere. But in every other department of literature, the value of a production is in direct proportion to the amount of

of its author. It should be, as George Calvert expresses it, "a distillation."*

A book, too, should be luminous, but not voluminous; it should be sweet-tempered: it should reflect its author: it should be a cast from his thoughts; a mirror of his feelings; a picture in miniature of his life. It should resemble a tranquil lake, in whose glassy surface

the experience which it embodies. A man can speak with authority only of that which he has himself felt and known. A man cannot paint portraits till he has seen faces. And all feeling, and most moods of mind, will be very poorly described by one who takes his notion of them at second-hand. When you are very young yourself, you may read with sympathy the writings of very young men; but when you have reached maturity, and learned by experience the details and realities of life, you will be conscious of a certain indefinable want in such writings. And I do not know that this defect can be described more definitely than by saying that the entire thing is veal, not beef. You have the immature animal. You have the 'berries harsh and crude.'"

* The books which nearest approach in their character to this description of what books should be, are legal digests. These tell us what the law is — that which we are principally interested in knowing; the reports of cases in detail, from which they are taken; beyond this, merely telling us why the law is the law — a matter in which we have only a secondary interest. Keen capacities demand results, not processes; conclusions, more than reasons.

the varied wonders of the earth and sky are faithfully imaged.

"As the air
Doth sphere the world, so should its heart of love—
Loving mankind, not peoples. As the lake
Reflects the flower, tree, rock, and bending heaven,
Should it reflect our great humanity;
And as the young spring breathes with living breath
On a dead branch, till it sprouts fragrantly
Green leaves and sunny flowers, should it breathe life
Through every theme it touches, making all Beauty."*

BUSINESS.

FORMERLY, when great fortunes were only made in war, war was a business; but now, when great fortunes are only made by business, business is war.

Choice of Business—In the selection of a calling for a youth about to enter the arena of practical life, regard should be had to the interest of society, as well as merely to the

* In slightly modifying this fine passage from the "Life Drama," so as to adapt it to a different subject, I feel that I have taken a liberty, but still one that its author, out of the greatness of his own love of books, would readily pardon.

prospective pecuniary advantage of the youth, and for this reason, that the interests of society and those of the individual are in the long run identical. Thus, instead of selecting a profession—that of the law, for instance—merely because more money may be made in it, or more consideration is paid to its members—a profession already overstocked, perhaps, and whose tendency is, to a certain extent, to promote contentions—instead of selecting such a profession, and thus adding, peradventure, to the stock of drones or mischief-makers in the community, it will be, in the end, to the benefit of all parties that some less dignified but more useful employment should be selected.

Conditions of Success in Business—Loose ideas on the subject of business will not answer. It must be reduced to something of a science. It has its principles, upon a knowledge and an application of which, success in it mainly depends.

In a majority of instances the unsuccessful trader may find an explanation of his want of success in this, that he was not so much en-

gaged in trade as involved in it; that he speculated without speculation; that he worked with his left hand and played with his right; that he made poetry the serious business of his life, and attended to his provision-business in the hours of his elegant leisure.

The principal conditions of success in business are three: a clear perception of the end, a right estimate of the means, and a wise and vigorous application of them.

Employers and Employees—Men of great ability and enterprise are usually severe task-masters, from mistakingly requiring from their employees a measure of energy and capacity equal to their own.

Excessive Devotion to Business—Mind, among business-men, is too exclusively appreciated as a money-making appliance.* Business is but a

* "There is nothing," says a correspondent of the New York Times, "which the business world discards as unpractical and useless so much as the quiet, thinking scholar. But this is the man who makes revolutions. Politicians are mere puppets in the hands of men of thought."

means. To forget this, and to live for it and in it, as an end, is a cardinal and pernicious mistake, to which much of the want of elevation in the mercantile character is to be ascribed.

There are even some ardent devotees of trade who would almost go to hell itself if they could get good bargains there. Their first salutation, perhaps, on meeting the devil there, would be, "Well, Old Boy, how 's sulphur?"

Men were created for something better than merely to make money. A close application to business, until a competence is gained, is one of the chief virtues; but to continue in trade long after this result is obtained, is one of the signs, not to be mistaken, of a sordid and ignoble nature. "The Graces," said Margaret Fuller, "appear on all shrines except those of Vulcan and Pluto."

Half-Price Men — Undersellers seldom succeed in business. The object of trade is profit; and to sell for little or none, is an effectual way of bringing it to a disastrous close. Competi-

tion, which is said to be "the life of trade," when pushed too far, is no less the death of it—and of the soul. For a tradesman, who wishes to be both successful and poetical, the best of mottoes is —

"Charge, Chester, charge!"

Retirement from Occupation—It is so natural for us to consider our presence as indispensable in the world, so long as we have much to do in it, that the wisdom of retiring wholly from employments in advanced life may be questioned. Certainly, he who does so is in danger of finding, before long, that he has only given up the occupation to which he has been accustomed, for the new business of calculating the period of his decease. Indeed, in every great change of life, to secure an increase of enjoyment—nay, to prevent stagnation, and its attendant melancholy—it is requisite that the new plan of life should still embrace some object to be accomplished, and sufficient provision for agreeable employment.

Ultimate Issues of Trade—The tendency of business is largely to run into a few hands:

and it may be that the world is now, through the operation of this law, in the process of being revolutionized. When this tendency has run to its extreme limit, as regards individuals, and financial operations, to a great extent, are controlled by a few bankers, the operations of trade by comparatively a few merchants and manufacturers, and a sort of trade feudalism—to which society seems to be tending—established, then associated enterprises may enter into ultimately successful competition with them, and continue until all societies are resolved into joint-stock concerns. In trade, as in governments, the principles of democracy must finally prevail; and it is the life of democracy to favor equality.





CALCULATION, AND WHAT COMES OF IT.

THAT “the age of chivalry has passed away,” as Burke lamented, is not so certain ; it still survives in every generous breast. Nor is it to be regretted, as he also complained, that our era is one of “calculators and economists.” Calculators disclose the resources of a state ; labor developes, and economists husband them.

It is very true, much of even the liberality in the world comes from some matter of calculation—from some such consideration as that, if we give or expend so much, we shall get in return, in cash or credit, so much. One is liberal that the fame of his liberality may be spread abroad. Another is so because he wants your vote, your trade, or your influence. Even my friend, who presses me with so much seeming cordiality to dine with him, may only want

me to amuse him. But this is ill-natured ; though it will please a certain class of minds all the more for that very reason. As for the more generous, they will except to the statement as overcharged ; and I shall honor their scepticism. Liberal minds are liberal even in their interpretations of illiberality.

The cheerful make the soundest calculations. The sanguine over-estimate ; the melancholy under-estimate.

The safest calculations are those in which something is allowed for miscalculation.

CARE.

CARE admitted as a too cherished guest quickly turns to be master.

To do a thing with too much care is to do it indifferently. Done in that way it lacks the careless grace of nature.

And yet, like all things which fill a large space in the economy of nature, care has

its valuable uses. A certain degree of care is even essential to promote enjoyment. Our cares are the conditions of our development, and are to be met and flung aside, as the gallant ship, under sail, rejects from her bow the waves that rise to impede her progress.

To-morrow thinks not of the cares of to-day.

CAUSE AND EFFECT.

SMALL circumstances illustrate great principles. One day my dinner cost me a trifle less than usual. This was an incident not quite so important as some others recorded in history, but its causes originated more than two thousand years ago. It also reminds us that causes are primary and secondary, remote and immediate, and that historians, when they speak of certain effects as produced by certain causes, refer only to the last of a chain of causes. Thus:—Socrates one day, in a conversation with Aristippus, threw out certain remarks on the subject of temperance, which, being overheard by Xenophon, were subsequently committed to writing and published by him. These,

falling in my way, made such an impression that I was induced, in the instance mentioned, to forego my customary piece of pudding after dinner, to the loss of the eating-house proprietor, whose receipts were thus diminished, first, by a few observations of an ancient Greek, secondly, by a report given of them by a bystander, and thirdly, by a perusal of them, after twenty centuries, by one of his customers.

CHARACTER.

GIVE me the character and I will forecast the event. Character, it has in substance been said, is "victory organized." "The great hope of society," said Channing, with still greater emphasis, "is individual character."

Character is distinctively an attribute of humanity. Animals have only various natures. That of the soaring lark, trilling its sweet notes in jubilant strains upon the morning-air, is indeed touched to the finest issues; but of character, properly so called, it is absolutely destitute.

If one could only tear down his character, as old buildings are torn down, and build it up anew, as these are rebuilt! And so, in effect, it can be. A noble property of character is, that it is susceptible of improvement.

Individuality—In few things do we err more than in exacting from our friends conduct not in keeping with their individuality. He speaks and acts best who speaks and acts up to the highest possibilities of his distinctive character. We do not expect the inferior orders of animals to transcend the limits of their natures: no more should we ask any man of a peculiarly formed character to talk or act like any other who is unlike him. Let him rather continue, in his speech, as in his actions, true to his individuality, lest it should be said of him—"Orator Puff has two tones to his voice."

Influence of Character—We seldom pause to consider the wisdom of a knave's words, but incline a willing ear to the suggestions of the worthy. Weight of influence, therefore, is according to excellence of character.

Influence of Health upon Character — Character is very much a matter of health. You see it in children. At one time, and for months together, a child will be peevish, fretful, selfish, and ill-tempered, and then, upon a change in its health, display qualities of a quite opposite character.

Interior and Surface Character — What is true as to the external and interior phenomena of our globe, is also true as to character — extreme coldness upon the surface may exist in connection with great internal heat.

Knowledge of Character — We become familiar with the outsides of men, as with the outsides of houses, and think we know them, while we are ignorant of so much that is passing within them.

Character-Painting — The new school of character-painting, introduced by phrenology, succeeds well enough in portraying the broader outlines of character; but in depicting the nicer traits which distinguish the individual, it has not had, and never can have, any great

success : for this purpose, its colors are too few, and its materials altogether too scant.

Perfection of the Character—The least of the virtues adds to the perfection of the character. It is with the finest characters as it is with the finest woods and marbles—the polishing hand is still needed to bring out the veins of beauty and of grace.

Tests of Character—Three things principally determine the quality of a man: the leading object he proposes to himself in life; the manner in which he sets about accomplishing it; and the effect which success or failure has upon him.

What he earnestly essays to do, also, more than what he effects, indicates a man's character. It is his whole life, too, not a few incidents of it, that proves the man.

Again: How good a man is, and how much a lover of the beautiful, may be conjectured by observing the number of times he uses the words beautiful and good. Or, more broadly

speaking, the phraseology of a man indicates his character. The frequent use of such words as beautiful and good denotes the optimist — disposed to accept men and things at their best — no less than the genial admirer and hearty appreciator ; while a familiar employment of epithets of disparagement or dislike imports a carping temper or a cynical habit of thought.

A man's character may also be surmised from the style of female beauty he admires. "Though an ardent admirer of the sex," says B., "there must be a certain character in the face that fascinates me: the heart must speak in it. Mere pretty pieces of rose-colored flesh, prettily put together, I am not so fond of."

And still again: A character is to be judged by its best performance. It is in this that it attains to its clearest expression; and to this, and beyond this, its aspiration tends.

Traits of Character — All men are alike in their lower natures: it is in their higher characters that they differ.

Gross natures resemble the substances used in filtering-machines, which let all that is pure pass and flow away from them, and arrest and attach to them only the vile and the impure.

A merely remarkable character abounds in contrasts; a great character is free from them. The latter is well-rounded, simple, and harmonious; the other, angular, irregular, and discordant. One is as deep as the ocean, and as calm as deep; the other has more surface than depth, and babbles like a brook. With less in it to arrest a sudden attention, the latter has more to repay a permanent study; while the former is full of strong points, rendered more striking by accompanying irregularities.

Scarcely a greater contrast in character is ever presented than that between a frank, bold, outspoken man—as fearless in thought as he is resolute in action—no mincer of words—who says what he thinks, and will stand to what he says—and another whose fear is jailer of his feeling, and who speaks to you as if each bystander was a spy, and yourself a confederate in villany.

An accomplished man is not to be taken for as good as he seems, nor an uncultivated man as altogether the boor he appears. The one has learned to soften whatever is harsh, and to conceal whatever is repulsive, in his character and address; while the other, from ill associations, has contracted peculiarities which disfigure or obscure his natural worth.

I have observed in two of my children these distinct types of character—that one wants to be active in matters that have in them some direct practical utility, while the other is more eager to be busy in fanciful things. Acting upon this difference, if I wanted my slippers, I should send little Stella for them; if a flower from the garden, Bella.

Unappreciative Characters—Almost as well warmly in the wrong as coldly in the right. The coldly critical man, who bows to you with his eyebrows, greets you like a nipping air, and “smells your business with a sense as cold as is a dead man’s nose,” has only to be closely connected with any of your generous enter-

prises to effectually kill them. Sympathy builds up: an attitude of indifference chills, disaffects, and destroys. With his coldly critical discernment of objections, the coldly critical man will take more enthusiasm out of you in an hour than the encouragement of all your friends can ever put into you again.

In fine contrast with such a character is the sweetness and benignity of my friend W.'s disposition. Such is the grace and suavity of his finely attempered character, that if his office was that of a hangman, he would have his cord of silk, and adjust it so kindly about your neck, that, for your life, you could not but feel indebted to his courtesy.

Undeveloped Character—It is difficult to pronounce upon the character of some men's minds, for the sufficient reason that they seem to have no minds at all. We even meet with faces and characters marked from the want of mark. As they move along the world's thoroughfares, they give us the idea of nobodies going nowhere. Or, rather, they suggest a new classification of the human species, after the manner of Lady

Mary Wortley Montague, into men, women, and — semblances.

Undeveloped Possibilities of Character — On the other hand, there are few — I am reluctant to believe there are any — natures that have not still some capacities for good left in them — still some generous qualities, surviving amid the wreck of better purposes, purer feelings, and worthier habits. Linger, like sparks in the ashes of an almost extinct fire, they are nature's provision for rekindling and lighting up anew, in the almost lost soul, the flames of better and nobler and heaven-aspiring aims. Fraud, meanness, cruelty even, in us, prove only that our higher character is as yet undeveloped.

Undisclosed Character — In the deeper recesses of every heart is a store of hoarded secrets — the cherished accumulations of years. Into this receptacle of our inmost thought and feeling scarcely our dearest friends are admitted. We confide to them our present secrets, but shrink from the disclosure of what we have so long concealed — of what perhaps they have so little suspected. Perfect confidence demands perfect

sympathy, and understanding, as well with our past as with our present experience.

Perhaps the natural character of a man may be best seen before breakfast. The world is created anew for us every morning, and he is just then reissued, as it were, from the hands of nature, with all his original peculiarities fresh upon him.

And, finally: Perhaps it is best not to study character too closely, lest the foibles revealed on a nice inspection make us forget the nobler properties which also belong to it.

Women as Judges of Character—It is more creditable to have the regards of a few noble women, than to be popular among a much greater number of men. Having in herself the qualities that inspire love, a superior woman is, for that reason, the better able to discern and to appreciate the traits that merit affection. The heart must be judged by the heart. Men are too intellectual in the processes by which they form their regards.

CHARITY.

ONE who has more than ordinary discernment, needs to have more than ordinary indulgence, to excuse much of what he sees, and lest it should be said of him, he knows many things, but how to be indulgent is not among them.

A simply equitable rule as to charity is to extend as much of it as we are disposed to exact: a generous rule is to extend twice as much. But it is with charity as with money—the more we stand in need of it, the less we have to give away.

Indulgence is accorded to our errors from characters and considerations widely different: the designing are indulgent from policy, hoping to profit by them; the depraved from sympathy, and wishing to share them; the wise from knowing our weakness, and the force of temptation; and the good from natural charity.

We should be sure, when we rebuke a want of charity, to do it with charity.

The nearest approach to the divine charity of Christ, expressed in the sublime prayer, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," occurs in the ever-ready excuse which the mother, all over the world, assigns for her child's perverseness: "Take that screamer out of my hearing," cries the stern father. "Oh," says the loving mother, "I don't believe the child is well."

CHEERFULNESS.

CHEERFULNESS is an offshoot of goodness and of wisdom. We look into a man's face, and see how cheerful it is, and then we know how wise and good he is.

The cheerful live longest in life,—and after it, in our regards. Cheerfulness, indeed, is a sanitary principle, as well to the body as to the mind, and is to both the cause and effect of their health.

It is only when we work in a spirit of cheerfulness that we effect very much. He is a good workman who whistles at his work. "In

every human condition," says Goethe, "foes to our peace lie in wait for us, invincible except by *cheerfulness* and equanimity."

A healthy and cheerful mind will still find something to interest it, even under the most unpromising circumstances. B., confined by sickness in a room with windows looking out upon a dead wall, had one day a visit from a friend. "What a dreary prospect you have here," said the latter, "with only these bricks to look upon! I should think you had come to hate them heartily."—"I assure you it is not so," was the answer. "I have studied the bricks in that wall until I know them. There is a great variety of character in bricks."

Cheerfulness in Old Age—

"Life is short, so let's be gay,"

is the song we sing in our youth, when life is longest, and if its philosophy is good for anything, then is there the more reason for our humming the same or a kindred catch in our later years. Youth and the lark have their songs for the morning; age and the nightingale theirs for the evening.

CHILDREN.

LOVE of children is the homage of the heart to unsullied purity. Indeed, children are the bright side of life. From our sins and sorrows, how refreshing is it to turn to their artless ways and purer joys! Would that they could all be so educated, as not, in their after-years, to darken life by their offences!

Many children, many cares; no children, no felicity.

Domestic Education of Children. — A child should be early taught to appreciate which is best, its own will, or that of its parents; which is safest to follow, and which points to the best conclusions; to the end that it may resign itself, with a cheerful acquiescence, to a will superior, wiser, more benignant than its own. And this truest and best relation of our children to us, is ours to the Supreme Father.

Loss of Children. — The most touching experience of my life was one lately recorded in an

obituary notice.* A beautiful fair-haired boy, of rare sweetness, and, as was fondly dreamed, of unusual promise — a child of hope, as well as of affection — the petted darling of a happy household — was suddenly summoned But, private griefs are best kept private. "We cannot have all things our own way:" — *some things must be allowed to go God's way.*

CIRCUMSTANCE.

TO become the master of his circumstances — to override them, as the stately ship overrides the waves, stormy or smooth, as her obedient element — not 'whelmed and lost in them — this is the aim and effort of every loftier nature; and to this end he receives assistance from within himself and from without, from God above, from men below, and from nature around him.

"Nature, a mother kind alike to all,
Still grants her bliss at labor's earnest call."

* "Died. On the 9th of October (1860), at the Summer Home of the family, at Cedar Grove, New Jersey, Roswell Lockwood, son of C. N. and Mary M. Bovee, aged 11 months and 15 days. A sweet, sad story, soon concluded."

Men more Creatures of Ideas than of Circumstance. — We are far more the creatures of our ideas than of our circumstances. Largely, the sentiments of the heart create the character of the life. Even class distinctions, traced to their remote causes, are more owing to differences of opinion as to what constitutes the highest good, than to merely accidental diversities of fortune. The several vocations have their several ideas, for which they are chiefly distinguished. The merchant's idea is to make money; the politician aims at place and preferment; the soldier seeks "the bubble, reputation;" and the scholar dreams of exhausting the stores of learning. Thus all are ruled by their ideas, and their hands, as Shakspeare says of his own and the dyer's, "grow to the color of that they work in."

CLIMATE.

THE colder the country, the coarser the appetites; the more heat in the atmosphere, the more fire in the blood: the highest virtue of the tropics is therefore chastity; of colder regions, temperance.

COMMERCE.

HOW grand a thing is commerce, in its amplitude and results! The triumphs of commerce have been the triumphs of civilization. It has stimulated so many inventions, and led to discoveries of such incalculable value, (including the discovery of America,) that it may almost be held, that the hope of commercial gain has done nearly as much for the cause of truth as even the love of truth.

Morals of Commerce—And yet, what a pitiful thing is commerce in some of its details! In commercial circles it is a principle pretty generally adopted, except among the one-price men—to whom be all honor—that it is eminently proper, indeed highly expedient, to sell as high, and buy as low, as possible, and it is considered a lucky wind that sends along a buyer or a seller who is not posted up in market-prices. He is deemed fair game, and plucked accordingly. But what is all this but a reduction to practice of the principle that weakness justifies its abuse; that every man is to be imposed upon who has not sagacity or information enough

to defend himself from imposition; in short, the pickpocket's principle — "If I can get that fellow's watch out of his fob without his knowing it, it is all right?"

COMMUNITY OF GOODS.

ALMOST the first idea a child has is that of ownership. Give the youngster a toy, and he will at once treat it as his peculiar property. This you will discover when you make a show of reclaiming it. Rather a hard fact this for the admirers of Proudhon's theory, that "private property is public robbery," and for those who hold that a community of goods is the natural, as well as proper, relation of persons to property!

A community of wisdom and the virtues must precede a community of goods. When these are held in common, lands and chattels will be.

In the mean time, nature has not left so important a matter as a community of effects wholly to our selfishness or generosity. In a gradually enlarging degree, she has equally pro-

vided for a community of property and a community of thought. Let us be as rich as we may, in goods or ideas, we must still share them, or be ourselves debarred from their proper enjoyment. The sweetness of thought is in communicating it. The older and choicer your bottle of wine, the more necessity for a friend to help drink it when it is uncorked.

There is indeed an ownership in the beautiful forms of nature and of art, beyond that of mere individual proprietorship, which all who look upon them may enjoy—the ownership springing from the taste to appreciate, the ability to admire without envy of immediate possessors, and the generosity which is capable of receiving pleasure from the thought of the enjoyment that fine things are adapted to confer.

COMPANIONSHIP.

CONSTANT companionship is not enjoyable, any more than constant eating. We sit too long at the table of friendship, when we outsit our appetites for each other's thoughts. Rightly to enjoy our friend, we should limit

our intercourse with him. It is no disparagement of my friend to say that I sometimes tire of him. The effect of companionship, pushed too far, is to make us share each other's dullness. Excess of company, too, vulgarizes the thoughts. "Philosophy," says Plato, in that charming romance, Mrs. Child's "Philothea" — "Philosophy has given me a distaste for crowds."

The most capable of adorning it are not so often to be met with in general society. Occupied in pursuits that lift them above the standard of the many, too fastidious for fellowship with crowds, and preferring the further cultivation of their accomplishments to a display of them, when they leave their retirement, it is only to mingle among the few companions of their own order, of kindred tastes and similar development.

Perhaps the most agreeable people as companions are those whose likes and dislikes are sharply defined. Distinguishing more clearly the excellence and the evil of things, their comments upon them are by so much the more racy and spirited.

Choice of Companions—It is a matter of obvious utility, though not so easily accomplished, for those afflicted with certain infirmities of character to select their companions with reference to their weaknesses—companions in whose society they would be ashamed to give way to them, and whose example and principles will operate as a stay to their own feeble resolutions.

Serious Companions—"The quarrel between Gray and me," said Horace Walpole, "arose from his being too serious a companion." In my opinion this was a fair ground for terminating the connection. What right has any one to be "too serious a companion?" If, as Sir William Temple says, "the first quality of a companion is truth," the next is cheerfulness.*

* That Gray's mind was at times darkened to such a degree as to necessarily make him a very unpleasant companion, he himself, in one of his admirable letters, clearly indicates. See his letter to his friend West, of May 17th, 1742, where he describes his melancholy as of that kind that "excludes and shuts its eyes to the most possible hopes, and everything that is pleasurable."

COMPARISONS.

IT is hard to compare two things and be unjust to neither.

COMPENSATION.

IT is some compensation for great evils that they enforce great lessons.

Inequalities of Compensation — Surely, nothing so inequitable as our present system of compensation for labor can endure forever. As matters stand, we pay best, it has been said, “those who cheat and cajole us, as politicians; next best, those who amuse us, as fiddlers and singers; and least, those who instruct us, as school-masters.” Let us believe that time and progress will ultimately abolish these inequalities; that remotely, that which all men are interested in establishing must come to pass; that the yearnings of the world will in time make the facts of the world.

COMPLIMENTS.

WE pay our friends a high compliment when we exert ourselves, beyond the common, to pleasure them. In the very effort to please there is involved a subtle flattery. When we are at great pains to please a friend, it is as much as if we said of him, in his hearing—"This is a very superior person, and one whose good opinion it is valuable to have. I will endeavor to acquire it."

Compliments to the Fair—Very handsome women have usually far less sensibility to compliments than their less beautiful sisters. Accustomed early to the homage of admiring eyes, they come to regard the admiration they excite as a familiar and ordinary experience, while the less comely, having only the imagination of love and caresses, are not only thrown into a flutter of delight at the approach of a compliment, but a tender sentiment of regard, it may be, is even awakened in favor of its author.

Compliments to Women of Sense—The finest

compliment that can be paid to a woman of sense is to address her as such.

Undeserved Compliments — Unmerited compliments are the keenest reproaches. What a tremendous sally of irony, without being intended as such, was that upon George the Fourth, when he was styled “the first gentleman of his age.”

COMPOSURE.

IT matters not so much that the outer world in which we live is disturbed and agitated, and rocked with contentions, provided only that we can stand, in the midst of its whirl and confusion of events, inwardly composed.

CONCENTRATION.

IT is not so much in the strength to succeed that we are usually deficient, as in the art of bringing the strength we have to bear where it is most needed, and keeping it there. Successful minds work like a gimlet — to a single point.

CONCESSIONS.

WE must yield something even to the whims of people — especially if we would have our own indulged.

In a contest with a weaker party it is more honorable to yield than to force concession. Magnanimity becomes the strong.

Generosity towards a vanquished opponent makes our victory over him appear the more signal. Even more than this — concessions to the defeated exalt the victor from an object of admiration to one of love. To the fame of superior courage or address, he thereby adds the glory of a greater magnanimity.

CONFIDENCE.

TO confide too much is to put your lemon into another man's squeezer.

A thorough scoundrel values the confidence you repose in him only so far as it enables him to abuse it. He desires that it may be absolute,

that it may put you more completely in his power. What an extremity of baseness does this indicate! But I am fain to believe that rogues generally are of a much milder type than this, and that it is safer to repose an entire than a partial confidence. As a rogue who will rob, will still shrink from murder, so a knave who will take advantage of an ordinary confidence, will nevertheless recoil from the deeper guilt of betraying an implicit and unmeasured trust.

CONQUERORS.

THE glory of the conqueror is the shame of humanity — the tribute of its deepest abasement to the realization of its highest form of evil.

It has happened with the greatest conquerors that they have begun with being esteemed the greatest of fools, and ended with being held the greatest of curses. They have first undertaken enterprises which wise men have proclaimed to be wild and chimerical, and prosecuted them until good men have denounced them as horrible and atrocious.

Decompose, too, the reputation of any mere military scourge into its original elements, and what remains of it? A series of fortunate accidents; of risks incurred and escaped through chance, and through the unrecorded exploits of multitudes of nameless individuals; the address and skill and courage of one man, placed by fortune in command, concurring with the address and skill and courage of many other men, of whose actions no account is taken — these are the elements which make up the fame of a great conqueror. How much in his career is due to chance; how much to his own temerity, capacity, or conduct; how much to the same qualities in his subordinates; or how much to the cowardice, incapacity, and misconduct of the enemies he has overthrown — these are all things which can never be ascertained with even tolerable certainty.

CONSCIENCE.

WHAT we call conscience, in many instances, is only a wholesome fear of the constable.

CONSIDERATION.

IT is a mistake to suppose that a superior measure of consideration in the world will insure a larger measure of enjoyment. History abounds in examples of men at the summit of power, and of established fame, who have confessed the inadequacy of both power and fame to confer happiness.

“Not in the fading echoes of Renown,
Power’s purple robes, nor Pleasure’s flowery lap,
The soul shall find enjoyment.”*

A decent competence and an unsullied name give equally the conditions of enjoyment.

“Ah, yet, ere I descend to the grave,
May I a small house and large garden have!
And a few friends, and many books, both true,
Both wise, and both delightful too!”

is the amiable wish of Cowley. One having these, if also a husband and a father, in his family is the head of a sort of limited monarchy, in which himself is king, his wife queen, his children princes, his housekeeper prime minister, and his servants, grocer, butcher, editor, and

* Akenside — *Pleasures of Imagination*.

all others that contribute to his enjoyment, his loyal subjects.

Among the lower arts for acquiring consideration, one of the simplest and most effectual is to extend at least as much of it as is due. "Ah, my friend, you are a ruined man!" exclaimed B. to an office-seeking politician, just after they had passed and exchanged salutations with "a certain very eminent personage." "Heaven forbid!" replied his companion; "but why do you say so?" — "Ah, my poor friend," was the reply, "you didn't bow low enough by two inches."

CONTENTMENT.

CONTENTMENT is not happiness. An oyster may be contented. Happiness is compounded of richer elements.

Surely, a man is not an ox, to be satisfied merely with a comfortable stall and a well-filled crib!

Contentment is either a great crime or a noble virtue, according as it applies to persons

or to things—to interior economy or to exterior means. The infamous are doubly infamous when they are contented under their infamy.

To remain contented with whatever can be improved is weakness. It is a law of higher natures to seek a greater satisfaction in progress, in a more advanced condition of things, and in the new circumstances of interest that arise in the course of its development. And certainly, one contented with what he has done will never become famous for what he will do. He has lain down to die. The grass is already growing over him.

CONTROVERSIES.

THE less the difference, the greater the quarrel over it. Controversies seldom disclose as much of truth as of bitterness in the disputants. Elevated natures avoid disputations. "Had Narcissus himself seen his own face when he had been angry," says Fuller, "he could never have fallen in love with himself."

Controversies, not involving vital principles, are best settled on the basis of mutual concession. It is better to lose a part than to put everything at hazard. Something is also due to conciliation.

CONVERSATION.

NOW that the press tells us everything as soon as it occurs—and sometimes a little sooner—conversation is probably, in many respects, much less attractive and animated than formerly, before newspapers came into vogue. In one of its principal departments, that of narrative discourse, conversation is pretty much superseded. Now we ask after the news, as we ask after our friend's health, with no interest in the subject, the answer being anticipated, in the first instance by the daily journals, as it is in the latter by our friend's appearance. The newspaper even aims, where we will allow it, to do our thinking for us. ✓

Americans as Talkers—In America the conversation of men turns too exclusively upon business and politics. As for the women, as

foreigners say, they chiefly he, he! grin, and giggle. But then, talking well is not the chief business of life: doing well is.

English and American Talk—The Englishman is superior to the American in conversation, because, while he, with proper liberality, invests much of his mind in this way, the latter invests more of it in action. John Bull talks for the pleasure of talking, and exults, with a rational pride, in an occasion to display his attainments; Brother Jonathan talks more for results, and, knowing as much, it may be more, exhibits less. The former is proud of his mind; the latter of the fruits of his mind: the one of his tools; the other of his work.

Eccentricities of Conversation and of Conversationists—Authors impoverish their conversation to enrich their works: the conversation of ego-tists consists largely of “said I,” and “said he” — “said he” generally having decidedly the worst of it: the proud talk down to you, as from an eminence;—that is, if they can get you to listen, which, if you are wise, is very improbable: in listening to what we have

to say to them, the manner of not a few plainly expresses — “I know all that you would say, sir, but” (indulgently) “go on, sir, go on. I will listen to what you have to say, but out of politeness, merely—not that I expect to be told anything that I don’t already know:” the verbose wrap their meanings in fold after fold of language, as if they meant to preserve them, mummy-wise: the vain talker is not only full of his subject, but his subject is full of him; he praises himself into contempt: the timid discourse slowly and cautiously, as if their purposes were disingenuous, and they were afraid of committing themselves: the anxious talk badly from excess of solicitude to talk well; while the self-conscious speak that they may look into the mirror of their words, and see themselves reflected good and wise men. These talk at you, instead of to you, or to their own ears, instead of to your ears. A pleasanter class of talkers are those who mix a good deal in cultivated society, and observe and read to “dissolve a sentimental manna on the tongue,” or to furnish themselves with topics of conversation: but then one may have read the same books before them, and their conversation usually

savors too much of their set or coterie. The most agreeable conversationists are those who have first the wit and vigor to start, and to give direction and an elevated tone to, a conversation, and next the magnanimity to listen to what others may have to say on the topics they have originated. Indeed, a leading secret in conversation lies in talking to please, not the talker, but the talked to. This explains why the conversation of certain people, in itself, intellectually, not remarkable, has such a charm for us.

Fluency—Brisk talkers are usually slow thinkers. There is, indeed, no wild beast more to be dreaded than a communicative man having nothing to communicate. If you are civil to the voluble they will abuse your patience; if brusque, your character. And, if you say nothing to the tedious, they will report you tedious. The tedious complain most of tedium.

Fluency is rather a sign of superficiality. At least, more consideration is paid to it than it merits. If what is uttered rapidly is in bad taste, "Oh," it is indulgently thought, "he

speaks hastily." Or, if it happens to be in a happier vein, it is assumed that it might have been more felicitous still if spoken with deliberation. And yet, fluent speech is very much a trick of animal vivacity. Women have more of it than heroes, and children than women.*

Superiority in conversation consists very much in talking first within your character, next to the character of your interlocutor, and then pointedly rather than copiously. It arises not so much out of a faculty of talking smoothly and fluently, as from a certain nobler art of talking closely to a subject well understood. To natural ability—which alone is not enough—there must be added, to form the accomplished talker, superior habits of observation and research, equally indispensable to colloquial eminence.

Loose Thoughts on Loose Talkers, and Habits of Talk—Whether one talks well, depends very much upon whom he has to talk to.

* "A child is fluent," says Horne Tooke, "because it has no wish to substitute one word for another." Its talk, it may be added, partakes wholly of the character of play;—that of an adult somewhat of the character of work:—involving, indeed, a twofold labor of thought and expression.

In too much conversation there is not so much an interchange of thought and feeling, as an effort of both parties to get rid of their *ennui*. The remedy for dulness in conversation is to talk less and think more.

We rarely hear a fine thought in conversation. Our best thoughts originate in stillness and seclusion: a friend enters — the thought departs. We even cease to think when we begin to talk. The exception to this — the really brilliant talker — is one who has caught the art of thinking aloud — of talking to others as they only talk to themselves.

Perfection of Conversation — Conversation is as much an art as a gift. And, like the other arts, it is a subject for progressive development. "Gentlemen are surprised," said Margaret Fuller, "that I write no better, because I talk so well. But I have served a long apprenticeship to the one, none to the other." The highest conversational power comes in our later years. At thirty the conversation of superior men is endurable, at forty it becomes attractive, and at fifty it is irresistible. Ripe, mellow, and

fruitful, the mind, at these latter ages, shakes off the fitful impulses, crude impressions, and presumptuous half-knowledge of youth, and takes on the steady vigor, larger observation, and broader understanding of maturity. As youth, like spring, is the season of bud and blossom and leaf, so manhood and age, like summer and autumn, are the seasons of ripened fruits and golden harvests.

“Speech Silvern, Silence Golden” — To much talking there is so little result! Talking never made a wise man: listening may. It happens with the talkative that the best of their lives runs into words. The sum of all the virtues with them is comprised in strongly expressing dissent or approval. But the reticent do better than this, and accomplish far more by quietly acting it.

COQUETTES.

IT is one of the arts of a great beauty to heighten the effect of her charms by affecting to be sweetly unconscious of them. In like manner, and to a similar end, the wit—often a sort of male coquette—preserves a demure

face, even while "setting the table in a roar" — the gravity in the one case being about as real as the unconsciousness in the other.

As well might a flower complain of the bee which its sweetness attracts, as a pretty girl of being gazed at when she goes abroad. But the complaint is seldom made in earnest. The pretty creature gets only what she bargains for. She dresses to look as lovely as possible, and then goes forth to concentrate the attention which she affects to disdain. Till this moment she seemed charmingly unconscious of the triumphs of her beauty; but tired of this pretty insensibility, she changes her rôle, and now pretends to scorn as impertinent the admiration she has been at so much pains to enkindle.

Coldness in the coquette is only a *ruse* for bringing on an increase of warmth in the lover. When the pretty charmer gives herself the airs of an "injured innocent," or takes the trouble to slight us, it is a sign that we have at least escaped the greater danger of her indifference. Coy, is the coquette, as a maiden, till she's won; warm, is she, as a mistress, when she yields.

COURAGE.

TO advance upon night and chaos with a serene forehead—not without reason is this held to be the highest grace of character. Courage ennobles manhood; cowardice degrades it.

Courage, again, enlarges, cowardice diminishes, resources. In desperate straits the fears of the timid aggravate the dangers that imperil the brave. For cowards the road of desertion should be left open. They will carry over to the enemy nothing but their fears. The poltroon, like the scabbard, is an encumbrance when once the sword is drawn.

Courage an Eminently Culturable Trait of Character—Of all our qualities, courage is perhaps the most susceptible of cultivation. Once overcome the instinct of fear, and courage supersedes it as a habit of the mind. Witness the almost uniform valor of veteran troops.

Influences affecting Courage—If a boy in his first quarrel gets a thrashing, it will go far to

make him a coward for life; but if, on the contrary, he gives the beating, the danger is that he will turn out a bully.

Soldiers ought to fight better abroad than at home. There the danger is greater in retreating than in standing their ground, and so they must remain firm. If it is death to advance, it is death and dishonor to give way.

In battle more courage is required to repel than to make a charge. The attacked are usually the first to give ground. The excitement attendant upon motion heightens courage, where it exists, and is a substitute for it, where it does not.

Courage of Rogues — Rogues' valor has the quality of fear in it. It is idle for a knave to talk of his courage: courage with him has nothing to justify it. At best he is but reckless. He has too much to fear, not to be afraid.

Courage and Timidity — Courage and timidity are the accompaniments of opposite tendencies of thought. The brave think only of the blows

they will strike; the timid of those they may receive.

COURTESIES.

THE small courtesies sweeten life; the greater ennoble it.

Excess of Courtesy — A profusion of civility is almost as objectionable as a scant measure of it: — the one belongs to the manners of a dancing-master, the other to those of a clown.

CRIME.

GREAT crimes seldom spring from any sudden demoralization in the natures of their perpetrators. What seems a fearful precipitation of character, is usually no more than the rending of a veil from the hitherto concealed parts of it.

What a position of transcendent horror must that be, where the perpetrator of a great crime, till then a stranger to positive guilt, finds himself suddenly cut off, and forever, from all human sympathy, isolated from hope, the tenant

of a solitary cell, and with a wide, impassable gulf yawning between him and that great brotherhood of which he has ceased to be a part — no longer regarded as a man, but as a monster in the shape of one, from whom Mercy herself turns away, and for whom Pity even has no tears!

CRITICISM.

NO work deserves to be criticised that has not much in it that deserves to be applauded. The legitimate aim of criticism is to direct attention to the excellent. The bad will dig its own grave, and the imperfect may be safely left to that final neglect from which no amount of present undeserved popularity can rescue it. Besides, good-nature is inseparable from good criticism. The good-natured critic, who discriminates in favor of, more than against, enjoys this advantage, that if he errs he is sure to err on the amiable side. And as Rufus Griswold suggested, that is “a barren kind of criticism which tells you what a thing is not.”

And yet it may be said (many things are said for a jest's sake, which never would be

uttered for truth's sake) that a blemish in an otherwise faultless production will add to its fame, by making it more talked about. Criticism is dumb in the presence of perfection. Delight is voluble, rapture speechless. The superlative terms applicable to a perfect work are limited in number, and soon exhausted. The creator of a great performance reduces his critics to helplessness when he presents no errors for them to expatiate upon. In mere kindness of heart he might throw in a blemish or two. Without a fault, his work has nothing but its beauty to recommend it as a "town talk," and is in danger of being passed over without discussion. The method of the critic is to balance praises with censure, and thus to do justice to the subject and—his own discrimination. A perfect work destroys the critic's art.

Women as Critics—The criticisms of women relate principally to externals. Valued and admired themselves so much for their beauty—the least part of their worth—women naturally fall into an over-valuation of exterior characteristics. For this reason, perhaps, women seldom

attain to much skill in the delineation of character. Like Madame D'Abrantes, they are apt to fancy that they describe persons when they only describe manners and appearances. This regard of women for appearances enters into their entire economy of thought and feeling. Combat a woman's objections, ever so much and so forcibly, and she will still urge as conclusive — "Well, but it looks so!"

CULTURE.

PARTIAL culture runs to the ornate; extreme culture to simplicity.

National Culture — Every nation has its distinctive culture. Irish culture licenses the passions;* American culture develops a spirit of enterprise; French culture, taste; German cul-

* If Irishmen, however, have the misfortune to get into difficulties through their passions, they have also the dexterity, more than any other people, to get out of them through their wit. Passing along Chatham Street one day, I overheard an Irishman say to one of the Jew pawnbrokers of that locality: "Moses, have you any pork to sell?" "No," said the Jew, "but I have an Irishman here that I would like to dispose of." "Faith, then," said Pat, "I'll buy the poor divil, if it's only to get him out of such bad hands."

ture, the speculative faculties; Italian culture, love of art; and English culture, all these and —personal arrogance.

CUNNING.

THE very cunning conceal their cunning;
the indifferently shrewd boast of it.





DANGER.

SOME dangers are to be courted — courted and braved as a coy mistress is to be wooed, with all the more vigor as the day makes against us. When Fortune frowns upon her worthy wooer, it is still permitted him to think how pleasant it will be erewhile to bask in her smiles.

Honest Men the Most Dangerous Foes — The most dangerous men are those who have a reputation for probity. Quarrel with these, and all the world take sides against you.

On Retiring Out of Danger — One judicious step backward is better than any number of false steps forward. And yet, precipitation is not graceful. Better, however, says Discretion, to part with your dignity than your safety. Among other reasons that may be urged in

favor of running from danger, it may be said that running is a very healthy and agreeable exercise, and that urgent business requires despatch. B. being reproached for hastening with great alacrity from a situation of supposed danger — “What,” said he, “you wouldn’t have had me walk from it, would you?”

Visible and Imagined Dangers — Our courage is greater to dare a visible than an imagined danger. A visible danger rouses our energies to meet or avert it; a fancied peril appalls from its presenting nothing to be resisted. Thus, a panic is, usually, a sudden going over to the enemy of our imagination. All is then lost, for we have not only to fight against that enemy, but our imagination as well.

DEAF AND BLIND.

ALMOST any one, if asked which he would rather be, deaf or blind, would unhesitatingly answer, deaf; but the deaf are usually suspicious, envious, and discontented,* while the

* Among the honorable exceptions to this rule, let me include the deaf and dumb poet, James Nack, who, by the

blind are as generally confiding, meek, and resigned. With such a difference in results, one might reasonably prefer to "go it blind."

DEATH.

NEXT to living with honor is to die with honor.

God has created too few unmixed evils to warrant the belief that death is one of them. In all things else in nature, goodness so abounds that we are authorized to infer that it does not stop even at the grave. It is only that her footprints here become invisible. "Death," said Marcus Antoninus, "is natural, and nothing natural can be evil. It is for some advantage, on the whole, that nature acts in this way."

Without death in the world, existence in it would soon become, through over-population, the most frightful of curses.* To death we owe our

way, has accomplished more with his four senses than most men with their five.

* "Were all the young tadpoles to become frogs, not only

life; the passing of one generation opens a way for another; and thus, in the economy of Providence, the very extinction of being involves an extension of the boon of existence. Even wars and disease are a good misunderstood.

The proper office of religion is to allay our terror of death by exciting hopes of happiness beyond it, but so little is this appreciated by divines, that it seems to me certain that our natural dread of death — the one great debt that cancels all others — is through their influence rather increased than diminished. "Men fear death," says Bacon, "as children fear to go into the dark; and this natural fear is much increased by the tales told of it."

He that shrinks from the grave with too great a dread, has an invisible fear behind him pushing him into it.

would the world be cursed with a plague of Egypt, but the frogs themselves would suffer, as there could not possibly be food for all." — *Buckland's "Curiosities of Natural History."*

DEBTORS AND CREDITORS.

THE sentiment of creditors is, that to owe is human, to pay divine, and not to pay *ferdish*.

To sue a debtor usually makes matters worse, both for the creditor and the debtor. This has been largely my experience as a lawyer. A suit impairs the credit of the debtor, and crushes his spirit, and thus defeats the object the creditor has in view. Besides this, almost as much money is spent in endeavors to effect collections by legal process as, in the aggregate, is collected in that way. It may not be expedient now to abolish laws for the collection of debts, but the time may come when it will be.

To interest a number of people in your welfare, when all other means fail, you may, if you can, get in debt to them. If they will not then promote your interest, it is because they are not alive to their own. It is to the advantage of creditors to aid their debtors. Cæsar owed more than a million of dollars before he obtained his first public employment,

and at a later period his liabilities exceeded his assets by ten millions. His creditors constituted an important constituency, and doubtless aided in securing his elections.

DECISION.

DECISION is better commended by giving something agreeable to do, than by any number of precepts recommending it. Want of decision, indeed, is want of interest. Stimulate interest, and you arouse decision.

Hasty and inconsiderate action is not decision, but a result of a want of it. The irresolute shrink from nothing so much as deliberation. Chafed by a sense of constitutional indecision, and intent on overcoming it in some way, the undecided seek in precipitate action an escape from doing nothing. But an effort at decision like this is equal only to a plunge in the dark. They "dare all" recklessly, because they cannot "dare" any one thing firmly. They are

"Like the shy,

Scared bird, to which the serpent's jaws are better
Than his rude eyes." *

* Sydney Dobell.

Women love decision in men — particularly in the matter of courtship ;

“For women, born to be controll’d,
Stoop to the forward and the bold,”

says Waller.

DEFEATS.

HE half retrieves a defeat who yields to it gracefully.

DEFECTS.

WEAKNESS in character, and incompleteness in performance, like blemishes in a fine picture, have never more than a partial claim to attention. Forgetting this, we become critics of the imperfect, and lose the greater pleasure which flows from the study of objects in their more genial aspects.

DELUSIONS.

MEN, like musical instruments, seem made to be played upon.

Life being full of harsh realities, we seek

relief from them in a variety of pleasing delusions. Love (a cynic might add) is one of them.

Perhaps no man is happy without a delusion of some kind. Delusions, it may be said, are as necessary to our happiness as realities. "Life," says Hazlitt, "is the art of being well deceived."*

Perhaps it is even of little moment how much we are deluded by fancy, provided only that its delusions are pleasant, and that we are not too early, too often, or too harshly undeceived as to their true character. One of the greatest

* Hazlitt—a very prince of essayists—was often, as in this instance, playfully austere in his observations upon life. It is true he was also, at times, seriously so, but this was the result of an extreme sensibility, aggravated by misfortune, rather than the effect of a natural harshness of temper. Betrayed in his affections, and deluded in his hopes, there was still ever a sweet spirit of humanity—a tone of pity or of love still trembling in his voice—even in his animadversions. Later in life, stung by disappointment, chafed by poverty, irritated by neglect, and goaded by persecution, he occasionally descended, it is confessed, to the office of literary executioner, but even here he still remained the servant of the law. His sternness is always the severity of justice. He never strikes but he kills, but his blows are in behalf of his great master, Truth. In pity he never hacks his subject. One stroke, and the head of the offender rolls in the dust.

bores in life is a too knowing fellow, who sees through all delusions, and will never let you enjoy any of them, not even your favorite ones, no matter how agreeable they may be, but must be always waking you out of some delicious dream, only to tell you, "My dear sir, you are dreaming;" as if it were not both proper and natural to dream. He forgets that many things are pleasant only while the delusions which make them so last.

Popular Delusions in Regard to Great Men —
Among the most remarkable of popular delusions are those that relate to the qualities of eminent personages. It matters not much what one says or does after his position is achieved, or his reputation established. Thereafter, all his performances bear the impress of power. His very extravagances will then be considered as the eccentricities of genius, and even as so many proofs of it. How far a confiding public may be imposed upon by a name, appears in the instance of the elder Dumas, of whom it has been said, that it is physically impossible for him to have written or dictated half of what bears his name, and that it is well understood

that he has not written one tenth of the works he has put forth as his own.

DEPORTMENT.

A GRACEFUL deportment, to a certain extent, is the accord of the motions of the body with the finer emotions or impulses of the soul. It is beauty of feeling incarnated in harmonious action — an “outward sign” of an “inward and invisible” nobleness. Properly, want of grace is want of naturalness.* An ingenuous man, therefore, is never, in any rigorous sense, ungraceful. Truth is the law of his life. “All actions and attitudes of children are graceful,” says Fuseli, “because they are the luxuriant

* To further illustrate my meaning, perhaps a little more clearly. Let a young girl, with a heart as fresh as the morning, and spirits as jubilant as the birds, as she wanders with easy, natural grace, “at her own sweet will,” and in “maiden meditation fancy free,” along some rustic highway, meet with a well-dressed party from the town, and if she attempts to regulate her steps, and to adjust her carriage to what she conceives to be the fashionable standard, she excites ridicule, and is criticised without mercy as destitute of grace; but let her suffer merely from bashfulness, an emotion proper to her age and situation, and although her trepidation may excite a smile, it is still an indulgent smile, and the workings of nature in her are witnessed with pleasure.

and immediate offspring of the moment—divested of affectation, and free from all pretence.”

DESIRES.

WE trifle when we assign limits to our desires, since nature has set none.

DESPONDENCY.

AT times we are at a loss to account for our despondency, and seek in vain for the causes of it in our present or adjacent circumstances. The difficulty, perhaps, consists in our not looking far enough. The explanation for it lies, it may be, not in a part, but in the whole, the totality, of our past lives.

DETAILS.

ALL greatness in performance rests upon a basis of details. A knowledge of what is general to a subject may suffice for the merely learned man, but a thorough knowledge of details is necessary to form the adept. Even in economy and morals a like law obtains. Lesser

affairs, well managed, yield more than larger concerns, loosely conducted. And a punctilious regard for engagements in small matters gives an assurance that they will not be neglected in more important concerns. Think you these are low thoughts? "The bird of wisdom flies low," says Landor, "and seeks her food under hedges: the eagle himself would be starved if he always soared aloft and against the sun. The sweetest fruit grows nearest the ground, and the plants that bear it require ventilation and lopping."

DEVELOPMENT.

WE are all naturally good, as much as we are all naturally evil. Our nature is a mixed one, a commingling of good and evil, with a predominance of the former, and a tendency to its larger development. The evidence of this is in the advances we have made, and are making, and in the superiority of the civilized man over his original—the savage. "Strange as the genealogy may seem," says a writer in the 'Westminster Review,' "the original parentage of that wonderful and de-

licious mixture of fun and fancy, philosophy and feeling, which constitutes modern humor, was probably the cruel mockery of a savage at the writhings of a suffering enemy—such is the tendency towards the good and beautiful on this earth.”

DEVOTION.

EXCEPT in a limited sense, it is not true that “ignorance is the mother of devotion,” but only of a particular kind of devotion—of devotion to superstitious observances, to rites and ceremonies, dogmas and sectarianism. That higher devotion than this—devotion to God and his laws, springing from the perception of his goodness, and a sense of our obligations, requires a larger measure of intelligence. The religious element is the deepest in our nature, but to exist in its best and purest estate that nature must be more developed and perfected.

DIFFICULTIES.

DIFFICULTIES, by bracing the mind to overcome them, assist cheerfulness, as exercise assists digestion.

If a thing is difficult, that in itself is a temptation to undertake it. Great difficulties, when not succumbed to, bring out great virtues.

Living is battling. Nor would an earnest man have it otherwise. Something of the same

—“stern joy which warriors feel
In foemen worthy of their steel”

is also his who has a spirit high enough to exult in difficulties as existing only to be overcome.

DIFFIDENCE.

NEW situations are the dread of the bashful; but, if no notice is taken of their embarrassment, they will soon become easy in them. It is well if they do not then pass from the one extreme of excessive diffidence to the other of over-familiarity.

DIGNITY.

DIGNITY of position adds to dignity of character, as well as to dignity of carriage. Give us a proud position, and we are impelled to act up to it.

Dignity of Washington—If there was anything to except to in the otherwise noble demeanor of Washington, it was in that he was a trifle too dignified. His dignity bordered upon austerity. In its effects it tended to repress gaiety; to restrain, perhaps, even in his intimates, a free, natural, and spontaneous play of character. This is indicated in what Chief Justice Marshall said of him: "His person and whole deportment," he observed, "exhibited an unaffected and indescribable dignity, mingled with haughtiness, of which all who approached him were sensible; and the attachment of those who possessed his friendship and enjoyed his intimacy was ardent, but always respectful."

DISAPPOINTMENTS.

A PARTICULAR disappointment is seldom more than an excrescence upon the trunk of a general good—a shower that spoils the pleasure-party, but refreshes and enriches the earth.

Disappointments in Love—A disappointment in love, when not fatal to our happiness, may

improve it. It may be like looking back upon a rock, after we are safely past it, upon which we might have split.

DISCRETION.

DISCRETION is the salt, and fancy the sugar, of life: the one preserves, the other sweetens it.

A sound discretion is not so much indicated by never making a mistake, as by never repeating it.

DISCRIMINATION.

IT is the office of discrimination to detect errors, but of good-nature to excuse them.

Next to the power that originates a good, is the taste that genially discriminates and nobly rewards it.

DISGUST.

A FIT of disgust is a great stimulator of thought—pleasure represses it.

DISHONESTY.

DISHONESTY is a forsaking of permanent for temporary advantages — a vain attempt to reconcile what God has made irreconcilable — bad faith and sound policy.

There is a class of vulgar knaves, who, from their grossness, unwittingly do a service to the cause of good morals by deepening our distastes for the vices they practise. The more dangerous knaves are those in whom there is a mixture of good and bad, and who, from their accomplishments, dignify offences and lend respectability to evil.

A small rōgue, aiming at eminence in rascality, is like a pimple that aspires to be an ulcer. An eminent pickpocket, much celebrated among his brethren for his professional skill, for which he was the object of infinite envy, was once asked his opinion of an accomplished rival. "Oh," said he, "in the simpler processes of the art he does well enough, but in the highest branches of the accomplishment, in fertility of resources and readiness of invention, he is

singularly deficient, a mere tyro, an ignorant pretender. His dexterity is merely of the hands, and the stuff of which great men are made is not in him." When this unfavorable estimate of his powers, coming from a source of such acknowledged greatness, was communicated to the unfortunate subject of it, he was overwhelmed, and despairing of accomplishing the great object of his ambition—the building up of a high and enduring name in the annals of his art—he at once retired into a situation of obscure honesty.

DISPUTES.

IT is better to yield many disputed points than to be always fighting for them. "A philosopher," says Sir Jonah Barrington, "has an easier life of it than a soldier."

The questions most furiously discussed are those which have in them a basis of truth, and yet a large admixture of errors. We inconsiderately take hold of, and mistakingly support or oppose them, as either wholly true or wholly false.

DISTINCTIONS.

A MORBID craving for factitious honors is the curse of the world: a rational love of honorable distinction among its greatest blessings;—so closely allied, in their origin, are the greatest of virtues and the gravest of crimes.

Honors soften fatigue. It is easier riding in a gilded and embossed saddle. Atlas, while he sustains the world upon his shoulders, is himself sustained by the admiration his feat excites.

Distinction is usually won by the two forces of an impelling power without and an impelling power within, accidentally uniting and urging us forward, like a vessel propelled by the internal and external agencies of steam and tide. This is indicated in the readiness of the intellect to meet unwonted demands upon it. Sir Walter Scott must have felt this when he wrote to his printer, Ballantyne, "When the press does not follow me, I get along slowly and ill."

DOUBT.

CAN that which is the greatest virtue in philosophy, Doubt (called "the father of inventions" by Galileo), be in religion what the priests term it, the greatest of sins? *

DREAMERS.

THE reveries of the dreamer advance his hopes, but not their realization. One good hour of earnest work is worth them all.

Dreamers, Thinkers, and Men of Action—
Dreamers are half-way men of thought, and men of thought are half-way men of action. With equal skill in generalization, the first are inferior to the latter in having coupled with it

* "The philosopher," says a friend, "makes Doubt an ally; the theologian, an enemy. The one is ever advancing to fresh conquests, the other has much ado to maintain his ground."

He also says: "The doubt of the philosopher has no reference to established facts, but only to statements based on insufficient proof; the doubt which the priest condemns is of what he deems an established fact. If the evidence convinces him, he is right to condemn the doubter; the philosopher would do as much."

a greater aversion to details; while between the two latter, there is the difference arising from an indisposition on the one part, and an inclination on the other, to make a practical application of what they think.

DRESS.

IN indifferent matters it is well to be indifferent; to dress, for instance, in accordance with the tastes of the world, rather than according to our own. Singularity in dress argues eccentricity of character. A queer cut of the coat represents a crotchet in the brain. It may not be wise to go with the crowd, but it is inconvenient to go against it.

The perfection of dress lies in the union of three requisites: in its being comfortable, inexpensive, and in good taste. It should not be so far removed from the prevailing mode as to excite attention, nor yet so far within the fashion as to imply a weak submission to it.

Little people should dress well — and generally they do — as an offset to their little-

ness.* On the same principle, the ill-favored, too, should apply the resources of art to remedy the defects of nature.

It is rather a mark of vanity not to dress well. The sloven thinks that nature has done enough for him.

Female Dress—It is a piece of impertinence to complain of a pretty woman's fondness for dress. Beauty is a sort of public property, and she who has it does well to enhance it by every proper means. How great is the pleasure that women give us by dressing tastefully—thus heightening the beauty that charms us! By all means let them continue so to dress.

A young lady can only look charming at so much per yard. A pretty miss in calico is a

* Little persons, also, are generally better and more compactly formed than men and women of greater bulk. They are seldom diminutive in their feelings, and are rarely without a certain elevation of manner. Indeed, nature, as if for their indemnity, usually gives the undersized quite a pronounced feeling of superiority. By so much as they are compelled to look up physically to their superiors in stature, are they disposed to look down upon them intellectually as huge, unleavened lumps of men.

lovely woman in silk ; and a charming girl in muslin is an angel in satin. At least she thinks so, and who would contradict a lady ? More than once, before I reached the age of discretion, I tried to get my wife to accompany me to church in an elegantly fitting dress, made of a handsome article of calico—but to no purpose. She would have considered it a desecration of the Sabbath.

DULLARDS.

DULL men are to be closely studied. Their qualities, like pearls, lie out of sight, and must be dived for.

DUTIES.

BESIDES the five senses, there is a sixth sense, of equal importance—the sense of duty.

Nature has not conferred upon us a responsible existence, without giving us, at the same time, the strength, rightly exerted, to perform its obligations.

Not with a sinking of the heart, then, should we go to the performance of a duty. Not so does the soldier of Honor earn his commission in the army of the faithful. If the cause is worthy of any, it is of a cheerful support. Did not Plato say, "God has so framed his laws that it is for the advantage of all to observe them?"

Duty and Inclination—Duty is one thing; inclination, it may be, another: to join these in enduring wedlock, so that duty shall be as the sweet bride, and inclination as the loving husband—herein is indeed a sacred office.





EAGERNESS.

THE objects of the eager should be worthy of their eagerness. There is, perhaps, no want of eagerness in the world, but it turns too largely upon trifles. Attention being attracted to a gentleman who was walking very rapidly, an inquiry was started as to the probable cause of his haste. It was suggested by me that he had a book to write, and by another that he had a fortune to make, but it turned out that he was only going to dinner.

EARNESTNESS.

HE must put his whole life into his work, who would do it well, and make it potential to influence other lives. Earnest by chance, rather than by choice, our life-activity is the result of innumerable small purposes, formed from without, and by the occurrence of new and ever-changing circumstances. What we medio-

cre men most want is, some strong leading purpose, originating within, possessing the strength to make others subordinate to it, and which looks to the exterior world as its sphere of battle and of conquest.

“Genius,” said the great French naturalist, “is great patience;” but it would have been as well had he said — Genius is great earnestness. Patience is only one faculty; earnestness the devotion of all the faculties. Earnestness is the cause of patience; it gives endurance, overcomes pain, strengthens weakness, braves dangers, sustains hope, makes light of difficulties, and lessens the sense of weariness in overcoming them. Yes, War yields its victories, and Beauty her favors, to him who fights or wooes with the most passionate ardor—in other words, with the greatest earnestness. Even the simulation of earnestness accomplishes much—such a charm has it for us. This explains the success of libertines, the coarseness of whose natures is usually only disguised by a certain conventional polish of manners:—“their hearts seem in earnest because their passions are.”

Earnest men, who believe that they have something more to do in the world than simply to earn a living in it, and who consecrate their life to a higher end than its mere enjoyment, are exposed to an unjust suspicion of being cold and unsympathetic. Lifted by their aspirations to a higher plane of thought and feeling, and absorbed by labors that lead them to deny themselves the usual pleasures of social intercourse, they grow to be like Michael Angelo, of whom it was said by Washington Allston, "If he did not often sympathize with those about him, it was because he had but little" (in his employments and mental habits) "in common with them. Not that he had less of passion, but more of the intellectual. His heart seems to have been so sublimated by his imagination that his too refined affections sought a higher sphere, even that in which the forms of his pencil seem to have had their birth."

Hope for the Earnest—There is always hope for the earnest—both of their amendment and of their success. It is only the inert, too indifferent to turn when assured of their errors, or too inactive to leap to the golden shore of Op-

portunity, even when drifting past it, whose case is hopeless.

ECCENTRICITY.

A GREAT merit, as they esteem it, of a great many people is, that they do as other people do. They are averse to departures from established modes. The manner of an action is to them of little less importance than the action itself. They move round and round in a circle, and because they keep moving, as it is somewhere observed, they fancy that they are making progress; and they are not always rendered sensible of their error, even when they discover, after much motion, that they are but a short distance from their starting-point. Their veneration for the past makes them unjust to the present. Offended by the presence of an original man, the ultra conservative mind stigmatizes him as "an Eccentric" — a term, as it is popularly accepted, of as fatal import as the word "infidel" in the mouths of sectarians. Now, I grant it is well, as Lord Brougham expresses it, to "do common things in the common way," but this is very different from the adoption of

a habit of servile imitation in anything.* It is in the very nature and office of men of progressive energies to walk out of the footpaths made by the many. The world is ours, to walk through it at our own gait—to work our will upon—to innovate and to improve it. “Always,” says Henry T. Tuckerman, “the truly characteristic is justified by a general and wise law.” It is even one of the conditions upon which its efficiency, or the success or failure of its efforts, depends, that the mind shall act with freedom, and be permitted to cast off, when necessary, the restraint of rules founded merely on usage.

And yet, it must be admitted, there is an order of minds in which great qualities coexist with inferior affections—of observers who rarely profit by their observations—of wise men whose wisdom is of the abstract kind that is seldom exhibited in action. Often in error, yet shrewd in detecting it, keenly alive to the ridiculous,

* Shakspeare, with all his popularity, has had few or no imitators. Such is the immeasurable distance between his and all other minds, that it would require genius to imitate him with even the slightest success, but to imitate at all is not the nature of genius. Those who would imitate him could not, and those who could would not.

yet often themselves ridiculous, they live but to mourn their mistakes, which they usually discover only when it is too late to remedy them. For their eccentricities they are esteemed fools by some, and enigmas by others, while their virtues are acknowledged, and their irregularities accounted for, only by the more discerning few.

Eccentricity as necessarily connected with Genius — Properly, eccentricity is not so much a component of genius, as it is a consequence of the habits of men of genius. The reputation for genius is usually acquired by severe and protracted intellectual labor. This occasions repeated reactions from an extreme tension to an extreme relaxation of the spirits — the transitions expressing themselves in sharp and abrupt impulses.

ECLAT.

ECLAT is a very uncertain test of merit. The same actions that will win applause, loud and long, in one society, may pass undistinguished, or even suffer interdiction, in another. For example, at the present writing, patriotism

is a crime in Austria, an aspiration in France, a duty in Italy. In the United States, too, loyalty, banished from the South, has found a more cherished home in the North. Besides, more eclat may be won by some chance event, in which a momentary obedience is yielded to an irresistible impulse or necessity, than can ever be gained by a life of rigid and undeviating submission to principle.

ECONOMY.

QUALITIES not regulated run into their opposites. Economy before competence is meanness after it. Therefore, economy is for the poor; the rich may dispense with it.

The poor man finds happiness in economy; the rich man, misery. "I know a man," says M. About, "who makes it a principle to never pay too dearly for anything. The habit of beating down saves him about ten francs a day, and detracts more than a hundred francs' worth from his happiness."

EDUCATION OF THE SEXES.

GIRLS are early taught deceit, and they rarely forget the lesson. Boys are more outspoken. This is because boys are instructed that to be frank and open is to be manly and generous, while their sisters are perpetually admonished that "this is not pretty," or "that is not becoming," until they have learned to control their natural impulses. The result of this is, that while men retain much of their natural dispositions, women have largely made-up characters.

EGOTISM.

HEAVEN help the egotist, for he needs its aid to get rid of one of the most narrowing of characteristics. Indeed, one is never so much himself, as when he goes out of and forgets himself. The larger-minded and more generous the man, the more he will find objects of pleasure, and subjects of interest, without and beyond his merely personal concerns. Shakespeare treats of all things, but rarely reports himself.

EMERGENCIES.

SOMETHING must be done, but what?— is the common feeling in emergencies. In such a juncture we naturally fall to assisting whoever is the first to spring an answer to the question, and to point out a line of procedure. We then cheerfully put ourselves under guidance, and comply with directions given, first, because they rid us of hesitation, and release us from the necessity of deliberation; and next, and more than all, because something is given us to do at the precise moment when action is all-important. Prompt and decisive action, therefore, is both the necessary price, and the indispensable condition, of leadership.

But, the art of meeting emergencies promptly depends more upon a certain constitutional alacrity of spirit than upon any mere keenness of intellect. I once knew a young man, not accounted very shrewd, who extricated himself from an embarrassing situation with a promptitude, and in a manner, that were admirable. Being at an entertainment one evening, in company with an inexperienced young lady, he

offered, during an intermission, to wait upon her to the refreshment saloon, not recollecting, before he got there, that he had only twenty-five cents in his pocket. To almost any one else this would have been a dilemma ; but not at all abashed, he handed her a printed list of delicacies, and asked what he should call for. Running her eye over it, she came to item—roast partridge. “Partridge,” said she, “partridge! I have never tasted partridge. I believe I’ll have a partridge.” “Partridge,” said he, “partridge!—why a partridge is as big as a turkey. People would say you came here to eat. Take a piece of pie ; it’s more fashionable. Waiter, a couple of pieces of your very best pie.”

EMPHASIS.

EMPHATIC always, forcible never.

ENDOWMENTS.

THE less endowed may always earn indulgence for their want of capacity by doing something to foster it in the more gifted. On

the other hand: Superior endowments are a subject of just pride only so far as they are applied to noble purposes.

ENEMIES.

WE have two lessons to teach an enemy who despises us—to value himself less highly, and us more worthily.

ENGLISHMEN.

THERE have been three great races—the Greek, the Roman, and the English. Of these the English is the greatest—the greatest in extent of dominion (the sea being added to that of the land), in diffusion of language, and in splendor of scientific, industrial, and literary achievement. The best things, indeed, of heart, and hand, and brain, have been said and done by Englishmen.

The English are said to be a nation of grumblers, but this only proves the greatness of their spirit. They aspire to perfection more than any other people, and are proportionably dissatisfied as they find things fall short of it.

But, turning to the other side of the account: It is impossible to flatter an Englishman's national pride. Applaud England as you may, and he will still consider that your praises fall short of doing her full justice. He will even resent your praises, as implying the possibility of a doubt of her preëminence.

Again: The highest greatness of a people consists in their ability to rise superior to selfish considerations. This Englishmen are not always able to do. Their state policy, especially, is often an eminently selfish policy. England has always for her enemies an iron hand; for her friends not always a generous spirit. Indeed, in their devotion to the interests of England, English statesmen very often forget what is due to the interests of humanity. At least, M. De Tocqueville speaks of "a conviction felt by all the people in the world that England never considers others except from the selfish point of view of her own grandeur; that all sympathetic sentiment for what is not herself is more absent in her than in any nation of modern times; that she never notices what passes among foreigners — what they think, suffer, feel, or do —

except in reference to the advantage that England may draw therefrom:" and he adds — "There is certainly some exaggeration in this notion, but I cannot say there is not much truth in it."

And further: There is, in an Englishman's character, a commingling of the haughty and the subservient — a result, doubtless, of the mixed nature — partly aristocratic and partly democratic — of his government,* and of the peculiar structure of English society, in which every man indemnifies himself for the subserviency he is required to exhibit to the classes above, by exacting a similar subserviency from those below him. A competent though severe judge of character, Thackeray, makes one of his personages say of his countrymen — "If you want an Englishman to respect you, you must treat him with insolence." It would not be safe to act upon the suggestion, but it still embodies a measure of truth.

* "An aristocratic republic, with a permanent executive — monarchy and hereditary aristocracy its unessential forms" — Bancroft calls it.

ENTERPRISES.

IT is not always necessary to see to the end of an enterprise before engaging in it. Something must ever be left to uncertainty. Is the cause a good one?—then, as Cecil well says, “Duties are ours; events are God’s.” One who must always see his way clear before he will start his enterprise; who will trust nothing to Providence, and leave nothing to chance; who must be assured of success before he has earned it, and must discover the end before he makes a beginning;—such a one may never suffer from a grievous failure, but as certainly he will never exult in a splendid triumph.

Whenever it devolves upon small capacities to carry forward great enterprises, they do not so much labor in their behalf as tinker upon them.

Who talk much of their plans, also, rarely accomplish them. The enthusiasm necessary to carry them forward flows off and disappears at the end of their tongues. The vital energy

upon which they must depend to effect their purposes is exhausted in talking about them. In art and enterprise, it is the steady, silent work that does the work.

Method of the Enterprising—The method of the enterprising is to plan with audacity, and to execute with vigor; to first sketch out a map of possibilities, and then to treat them as probabilities.

ENTHUSIASM.

GREAT designs are not accomplished without enthusiasm of some sort. It is the inspiration of everything great. Without it no man is to be feared, and with it none despised. It is a mistake to suppose that enthusiasm blinds to consequences, and clouds the judgment. It assists it. Perhaps no man ever had more enthusiasm than Ignatius Loyola, and yet his biographer says of him that his judgment was inspired by his enthusiasm, but his enthusiasm never controlled his judgment.

In most forms of enthusiasm there is an element of narrow-mindedness. And, the more

enthusiastic we are, the more we are liable to be imposed upon, and to become the tools of the designing. Cromwell hated the deists, says Smollett, "because they gave him no hold upon enthusiasm, by which he could govern or overthrow them." And yet, despite this liability, who would not rather be enthusiastic, even in an only tolerable cause, than indifferent to all causes?

I like to talk with enthusiasts — especially when their enthusiasm has taken a right direction, and relates to worthy objects. One can always learn so much from them. Enthusiasts, however, should talk as little as possible of their plans. Their enthusiasm will rarely be shared, and so it will be dampened. Let us talk little of our plans, do much towards them, and let the result speak for itself — this is our wiser procedure.

EQUALITY.

WHEN a poor *friend* comes to me as a *man*, to talk with me as a *man*, he is cordially welcome, and our intercourse proceeds at once on the basis of our common manhood;

but when he comes to me in his character of *poor* friend, to talk up to me as his superior, what wonder if I assume airs, and talk down to him as an inferior. He degrades me in degrading himself.

ETIQUETTE.

THE rules of etiquette were established mostly by women, are chiefly for the benefit of women, and are mainly suited only to the nature of women; and a too punctilious observance of them by a man, goes to show that over-refinement has nearly unsexed him. It is not meet that the strong, free limbs of manhood should be fettered by the silken threads of ceremony—threads woven by pretty triflers in their loom of idleness—nor that the graces should be cultivated at the expense of that frank, open, and flowing courtesy which is, in truth, the highest mark of the true gentleman.

EVILS.

I DESIRE to go through life knowing as little of the evil in it as possible. To this

end, I sometimes avoid looking too closely into the nature of things, studying them only so far as they seem to be good, and abandoning interest in them as soon as their darker features begin to appear. The good only deserves a hearty interest.

For every great evil, apparently irremediable, there is reserved, it is probable, somewhere in the designs of Providence, an effectual remedy.

Intangible Evils — It is the prolonged strife, embittered by the want of sympathy, with impalpable evils we cannot grapple with, that wears the spirit out of a man. Very different is this from actively contending with great difficulties, where visible struggles attract visible sympathy, and excite visible respect, and where the result is usually, and even in the case of the naturally weak, to brace and strengthen the character.

Treatment of Evils — Evils are to be traced to their sources, and struck at *there*. Like Barbary pirates, they are to be destroyed through

the suppression of the state that sends them forth.

But the more common method of getting rid of an evil is, to merge it in a greater. Thus, if one suffers a loss of half his fortune at play, he overcomes his mortification by—losing the other half. The most ingenious expedient of this kind, was that of the indigent gentleman of rank, who married his washerwoman to get rid of her bill against him.

EXAMPLE.

EXAMPLE has more followers than reason. We unconsciously imitate what pleases us, and insensibly approximate to the characters we most admire. In this way, a generous habit of thought and of action carries with it an incalculable influence.

EXCITEMENTS.

ABERNETHY ascribes the origin of most diseases to excitement, a theory which seems to be favored by the fact in statistics,

that while the average duration of life in England at large was at one time only thirty-three years, among the Quakers, the class least subject to excitements, it was fifty-three.

Excitement counteracts Pain — We wince under little pains, but nature in us, through the excitement attendant upon them, braces us to endure with fortitude greater agonies. A curious circumstance, that will serve as an illustration of this, is told by an eminent surgeon, of a person upon whom it became necessary to perform a painful surgical operation. The surgeon, after adjusting him in a position favorable to his purpose, turned for a moment to write a prescription ; then, taking up his knife, he was about making an “imminent deadly breach” in the body of his subject, when he observed an expression of peculiar distress in his face. Wishing to reassure him, “What disturbs you?” he inquired. “Oh,” said the sufferer, “you have left the pen in the inkstand!” and this being removed, he submitted to the operation with extraordinary composure.

EXPRESSION.

WE fail in vigor of expression from not trusting sufficiently to our feelings, from not permitting them to express themselves, and from abandoning natural for artificial expression.

There are three principal modes of expression — by suggestion, by indication, and by explanation. The first is the method of genius ; the last of prosers. They underrate the intelligence they address who explain too circumstantially.

Figurative Expression — Three things produce striking figures of speech : a brilliant fancy, an ardent imagination, and a — scratching of the head. Hence the baldness of some of our highly figurative speakers and authors.





FACES.

ALWAYS where there is nobleness in the character, there is something of beauty in the face. Or, as Dr. South, with greater energy of expression, observes — “Truth makes the face of that person shine who speaks and owns it.”

Most faces wear a look as if corrupted from their original innocence — as indeed they are. Few carry forward into womanhood — none into manhood — that which gives its charm to the sweet infant’s face — the look of purity.

The loveliest faces are to be seen by moonlight, when one sees half with the eye and half with the fancy.

FACTS.

TO no circumstance is the wide diffusion of error in the world more owing than to our habit of adopting conclusions from insuf-

ficiently established data. An indispensable preliminary, then, in every investigation, is to get at the facts. Until these are arrived at, every opinion, theory, or system, however ingeniously framed, must necessarily rest upon an uncertain basis.

Contemporary Events — Few events of great importance can be rightly estimated in the season of their occurrence. Time must first remove them to a distance, where they can be seen in connection with their results, and disconnected from the feelings and biases of the period.

New Facts — In the presence of new facts we are all very much as children. Let us, then, sit down to their examination with becoming modesty.

FAILURES.

A FAILURE usually establishes only this, that our determination to succeed was not strong enough.

FAME

A FEW words upon a tombstone, and the truth of those not to be depended on.

There are a good many things much discussed, and a good many objects much pursued, that are a sort of butterflies of the mind:— you pursue, overtake, and grasp them, and lo! they perish in the very instant they are seized. Fame—

“A flower upon a dead man’s heart”—*

is one of them.

Fame—

“—— next grandest word to God!”

as Alexander Smith, with unusual breadth and a scarcely authorized license of expression, calls it—is sometimes cheaply purchased. Witness that of the author of Ben Jonson’s famous epitaph—famous because of a certain music in the words, like that which makes it a pleasure to

* This line of Motherwell’s is certainly very striking. It presents a figure, if I may use the expression, sculptured in words.

quote certain authors, and which led Burke to say of Sir Joshua Reynolds, when knighted, that his name was in exact harmony with the title conferred upon him. "Jonson lies buried," says Aubrey, "with only this description over him — O Rare Ben Jonson — which was done at the charge of Jack Young (afterwards knighted), who, walking there when the grave was covering, gave the fellow eighteen pence to cut it." Lucky Jack Young! to have escaped oblivion at the cost of only eighteen pence, and to have gained an immortality through seeking to confer it. "Cæsar, by raising Pompey's statue, established his own," said Cicero in a like case.

FANCY.

SO important a part is that which fancy plays in our affairs, that half the facts of life may be held to be only matters of fancy.

FASHION.

THERE would not be so much harm in the giddy following the fashions, if somehow the wise could always set them.

It is of little use to quarrel with particular fashions, however absurd. Fashionable follies seldom stand their ground long enough to be made the objects of serious attack. And where they give way to it, it is only to reappear in some new guise.

A great part of mankind, and nearly the whole of womankind, are so constituted that they will follow fashion, though it be to the devil. Even devotion is in no small part a matter of fashion. Churches themselves, to a good many people, are only a sort of fashionable lounging-places. "As for the state of learning here," writes Addison from Paris in 1699 to his friend Charles Montague (afterwards Lord Halifax), "there is no book comes out at present that has not something in it of an air of devotion. Dacier has been forced to prove his Plato a very good Christian before he ventures upon his translation, and has so far complied with the taste" (*i. e.* fashion) "of the age that his whole book is overrun with texts of Scripture, and the modern notion of preëxistence, supposed to be stolen from two verses of the prophets. Nay, the humor is

grown so universal, that it is got among the poets, who are every day publishing Lives of Saints, and Legends in rhyme."

Fashion indeed reigns everywhere. It is like certain of the gods of the ancients; worshipped under various names and in different countries, and invested with even dissimilar attributes, it is still the same at all times and in all places. It is a sort of terrorism. What was the Reign of Terror itself, so called, but a grim fashion which people got into of amusing themselves by crying *à la lanterne*, and carrying the joke too far? This reign of terror is not over yet, and never will be. Forsaking its stronghold in the domain of dogmatic theology, wherein it points its canons against all who belong to other than a particular sect, it enters the arena of politics, and hangs or decapitates you for the sin of being born, perhaps against your very nature, into a superior class. From this it flies to the department of art or of philosophy, and there establishes, at different periods, a succession of conflicting schools, in which it is fatal to all pretension not to admire in one age what will be condemned in the next. Nothing is too

high for it—nothing too low. It is “Figaro here, Figaro there, Figaro everywhere.” Although of a privileged order, perhaps, it denies you at one time the reasonable privilege of wearing your own hair upon your own head, and at another, the no less reasonable privilege of wearing your own head upon your own shoulders. What was Napoleon even but a mighty leader of Fashion!—of a bad fashion that prevailed in his time of waging war? Hurrah, then, for fashion!—which is much the same as the French cry of *Vive la bagatelle!*

Fashionable Exclusivism—Hermits no longer live altogether in caves and solitary places: some of them have even taken up their abodes in populous cities. Strangers to the broader sentiments and sweeter spirit of humanity, aliens to the social affections, isolated in their feelings, neither asking for nor yielding sympathy except in a conventional way, and within the limited sphere of a narrow coterie, these people live the lives of recluses under the name of exclusives. As Burke in a political, so they in a social way;—though

“Born for the universe, they narrow the mind,
And to *fashion* give up what was meant for mankind.”

They even go to fashion for their duties, and would reject Christ on earth—the carpenter's son—as not of their set. Exclusivism like this—nay, all exclusivism—limits growth. The more elevated the circumstances, and the higher the advances in culture and all noble accomplishments, the more necessity to cultivate sympathies downwards, and to open out kindly and familiar relations with the less fortunate and the less endowed. Who does less than this emasculates his manhood. He is a mere class man.

Fashionable Display—Any violent objection to the fair sex seeking distinction in fashionable display is scarcely admissible when we consider that this is almost the only avenue to eminence open to them. The extravagance of some, and the pretension and ostentation of others, are to be regretted, certainly; but if all the modes of seeking distinction practised by the other sex were as harmless, the world would have reason to congratulate itself.

Men of Fashion—Sense, to a man of fashion, is perhaps rather an incumbrance than otherwise. More than a certain amount of it is in-

consistent with the character, and interferes with his sustaining it. Ladies, with their accustomed sweetness, readily pardon its absence. The air distinguished, and the graces of the saloon, go very far with them. "Is not D—— a silly fellow?" said one lady to another. "Oh, bless you, no," said she; "he is excellent at—carrying a parasol." "But why do you give him so much of your company?" "Well," said she, "it is true he has only two ideas, but it is something to say that I am one of them." "And what is the other?" persisted her friend. "Himself, to be sure," was the pretty reply.

FASTIDIOUSNESS.

A STATEMENT of a truth is perfect when it is complete within a paragraph, and is so framed as to carry immediate conviction. An admirable instance of this perfection of statement occurs in a remark on fastidiousness by the author of "Characters and Criticisms." "We tire of few things so soon as fastidiousness," he says, "for it is impossible to love those whom we cannot satisfy or please."

FAVORS.

WE absolve a friend from gratitude when we remind him of a favor. The obligation becomes from that moment simply a debt — to be paid off, if he is a spirited fellow, as soon as possible.

FEAR

THERE is a great beauty in going through life fearlessly. Half our fears are baseless — the other half discreditable. A generous man scorns to hold even life itself upon a tenure of fear.

Good men have the fewest fears. He has but one great fear who fears to do wrong: he has a thousand who has overcome it.

Fear magnifies the proportions of objects. Perhaps it is upon this principle that apparently well-attested accounts of sea-serpents, and other like stories, are to be explained. An acquaintance once asked a noted duellist what the muzzle of a pistol, when pointed at him, looked

like. "Why," said he, "it looks as big as the head of a flour-barrel."

FEELING.

LIFE," says Horace Walpole, "is a comedy to him who thinks, and a tragedy to him who feels." This was prettily said, but not truly. Life is indeed enriched by thought, as it is ennobled by action; but fulness of feeling is its chief glory, and its crowning grace.

Nothing is lost on him who sees
With an eye that feeling gives,
For him there's a story in every breeze,
And a picture in every wave."

To the unfeeling the world is only as a vast surface, painted all over with shapes of vegetable and other substances, and with figures of men and women and other animals covering it. The life in the latter they recognize only as we recognize the existence of life in oysters, without sympathy for the pleasures, or care for the ills, connected with it.

FLATTERY.

PERHAPS the society in which we take the greatest pleasure is that in which we are the most flattered — not in the gross way of personal compliment, but by attentions that indicate esteem.

That flattery must be very coarse, the sincerity of which is suspected. Ordinarily, to impose upon the reason, it is only necessary to flatter the pride. “Mr. Hogg frankly declared,” says one of the biographers of the Ettrick Shepherd, “that in those who praised his works he placed implicit confidence, and for those who did otherwise he entertained very little regard.”

Flattery of the Great — But, it requires a great genius to flatter successfully a great personage. The common arts of adulation are thrown away upon the exalted. They are so accustomed to these that they take little notice of them. Invention is required, and we can only attract their regards by some such stroke of originality as that by which Raleigh won the favor of Elizabeth.

There are even some persons whom we cannot flatter if we would. Their merit is above all praise.

FLOWERS.

A BEAUTIFUL custom — one which I should like to see more generally adopted — prevails in some parts of Europe, of scattering periodical offerings of fresh flowers upon the graves of departed friends. Flowers are esteemed by us, not so much on account of their intrinsic beauty — their glowing hues and genial fragrance — as because they have long been regarded as emblems of mortality — because they are associated in our minds with the ideas of mutation and decay. Are they not, then, the most appropriate tributes we can place over the decaying forms of those whom we once loved, and now in sadness lament?

Cultivation of Flowers — To cultivate a garden is to walk with God, to go hand in hand with Nature in some of her most beautiful processes, to learn something of her choicest secrets, and to have a more intelligent interest awakened in the beautiful order of her works elsewhere.

Flowers, Friends, Books, and Children — They who take a lively interest in flowers, and books, and children — who find their best enjoyment in the products of the garden and the study, and the pleasures of the fireside — are little likely to do much harm in the world. They have something better to engage them than mischief. Happy themselves, and wishing happiness to others, they desire

“To live like brothers, and, conjunctive all,
Embellish life.”

Fruits and Flowers — There is that in the wonderful beauty of fruits and flowers that reveals a divine origin, and inspires awe almost as much as the grander phases of nature. The firmament glittering with stars ; “ old Ocean’s gray and melancholy waste ; ” the mountains with their lonely summits enveloped in snow, or lost in the clouds : these are all revelations of God’s power, but it is easier to conceive them to have been the results of chance, than so to regard these more exquisite creations of the Divine hand.

Fruits, Flowers, Pictures, and Statuary — The

utility of all exhibitions of fruits and flowers, pictures and statuary, lies not so much in the immediate enjoyment they afford, as in the after-character of beauty which they attach to the thoughts, and in the happier tone they impart to the feelings.

Nomenclature of Plants — The pedantic practice of giving Latin names to flowers and plants has just this effect, that it prevents every one, save the merely technical student of botany, from recollecting them. Most cordially, therefore, do I second the opinion of that charming authoress, Miss Mitford, when she says that “one is never thoroughly sociable with flowers till they are naturalized, as it were, christened, provided with decent, homely, well-wearing English names.”

FOLLIES.

THERE is a time for all things, it is said, and so of course for a little folly. Follies are great instructors. We should be thankful for what we learn from them. In good part, even, our past follies are the measure of our present wisdom.

To laugh at folly is every man's privilege, but to excuse it is the prerogative of the good man alone.

The best security for avoiding follies is to keep out of companies in which they are tolerated, lest, through complaisance, a tendency to conformity, the wish not to appear singular, and a desire not to give offence by appearing superior to the habits of the class we are in, we are led to commit the same follies to which they are addicted.

A great many follies escape derision only because of the gravity which accompanies, and the numbers that commit them. It is thus, as Varnhagen observes in writing about Humboldt, with much political business — "it consists of mere trifles, not at all important in themselves, but becoming important because everybody has agreed to consider them so. Thus," he adds, "the established hypocrisies of forms, presumptions, and exaggerations, drown the truth."

A born fool need take no trouble to conceal his folly, for, like murder, it will out. "Love,

smoke, and the itch," say the Italians, "admit of no concealment:" and so of folly.

FORCE.

FORCE should be resorted to only in obedience to necessity; but when employed, it should be used unsparingly — to the fullest extent necessary to cover the object proposed. "Power," said John Randolph, "knows no other check but power."

FORTUNE.

FORTUNE, like a coy mistress, loves to yield her favors, though she makes us wrest them from her.

For every fortune gained by chance, a thousand may be instanced as made by the labor of the hands, and ten thousand by that of the brain.

Fortune, in the distribution of her gifts, resembles a good fellow throwing pennies into the air for children to scramble after. She does

not cast to this and to that one according to their respective merits, but leaves chance and their own activity to determine who shall get the most of her bounty.

None are louder in their complaints of Fortune's blindness than those who, like the attorney in "Gil Blas," first set up a carriage at the suggestion of their vanity, and afterwards set it down at the suggestion of their baker. But the truth is, her discrimination is principally exercised, as in their case, in reclaiming her gifts from the indiscreet or the undeserving.

The use we make of our fortune determines its sufficiency. A little is enough if used wisely, and too much if expended foolishly.

FRETTING.

MINDS, like engines, work differently: some smoothly, and without jar; others rackingly,

"Fretting the pigmy body to decay."

Some minds, again, fret inwardly, and others outwardly: the latter is the better procedure for

ourselves, but the worse for our friends. But, every way, fretting makes life a misfortune, shortens our days and lengthens our cares, and confers no single good in return for the ills it occasions.

FRIENDSHIP.

THE essentials of friendship are mutualities of good-will and kind offices. A partial friendship may spring from benefits conferred or received, but a perfect friendship can only arise out of both. The most perfect friendship I can conceive of, is that which may be supposed to exist between a blind beggar and his dog. They are little to the rest of the world, but everything to each other.

Between friends there must also be a common basis of likes and dislikes. In the same degree that a person is peculiar in his tastes and dispositions, is it difficult for him to establish close personal regards. Failing, as it is likely he will fail, to meet with persons of kindred qualities, to make himself acceptable he has to control those peculiarities in himself, and, it may be, overcome a distaste for them elsewhere.

False Friends — False friends are like our shadows, keeping close to us while we walk in the sunshine, but leaving us the instant we cross into the shade.

Fast Friends — A warm friend will speak warmly of his friend. He will not be silent on his merits, when they are alluded to, nor “damn him with faint praise.” It is the privilege of a friend to say of us with propriety what we cannot with delicacy say of ourselves.

Foibles in Friends — A generous estimate of a friend’s nobler qualities should prevent us from giving particular attention to the little foibles that sometimes obscure them. It was said of Herder that he loved Lessing when he considered him as a whole, but that this did not prevent him from constantly finding fault with him as to details — an admirable remark, and one which applies with great emphasis to certain husbands, who, loving their wives with all the fondness that a theorist has for his ideas, are still addicted, on petty occasions, and for slight causes, to the miserable habit of picking them to pieces.

Friendships after Forty—The truest friendships are formed before forty. True friendship is heroic; only a few are capable of it at any period, and the glow of feeling and the exaltation of sentiment—the elements of heroism and of a noble friendship—lose their intensity with the advances of age. The heart grows suspect with years, reserves its confidence, distrusts appearances—or studies them—and, more than all, becomes so filled with inferior affections, that less room is left in it for this nobler passion.

Literary Friendships—Literary personages value their acquaintances, in a greater or less degree, according to the intellectual stimulus their society affords. Bring them a new idea, and you may always make sure of their best offices. If you should also happen to have something odd, some queer twist in your character, they will make as much of you as an entomologist of some new insect, and embalm you in their next book or article.

Political Friendships—The friendship of a politician is apt to be simply the result of a

nice calculation as to how much your influence is worth, just as the regard of a necessitous man sometimes grows out of a theory he has formed as to how much he can borrow of you.

Quarrels of Friends—For two persons who have once professed friendship, of the warmer and more enduring kind, to part in anger for some trivial cause, never to meet again as friends, and then to disparage each other—is equivalent to a confession that the soil of their affections is too thin for a true friendship to flourish in.

“Those never loved
Who dream that they loved once,”

says Mrs. Browning. For my part, I would rather grieve almost anywhere than at the grave of an old regard; nor will I, however estrangement may step in between us, cease to cherish the memory of a friend's generous qualities because, it may be, he has quarrelled with my want of them. Once a friend, always a friend.

THE FUTURE.

THE mind that busies itself much with the future has need to be an uncommonly cheerful one.

By thinking too much of the other world, we become unfit to live in this.

Indeed, altogether too much thought is given to the next world. One world at a time ought to be sufficient for us. If we do our duty manfully in this, very much consideration of that next world may be safely left until we are in it. At least, if Faith and Hope point the broken in health, in fortune, and in spirit, to the next life, as an indemnity for the hardships of the present, Duty not less imperatively demands the attention of the more fortunate and vigorous to the necessities, the requirements, and the obligations of this.





GENIUS.

BETWEEN the man of talent and much information, and the man of genius, there is much the same difference as between a full tank and an unfailing fountain. The mind of the first is a receptacle of valuable facts, and possibly of rich and generous ideas, susceptible, however, of being exhausted; that of the latter is an original source of wisdom, which suffers no diminution by what it imparts.

Errors of Genius — The errors of men of genius especially are more to be mourned over than their misfortunes. Every violation of every natural law has annexed to it certain penalties; but to the man of genius, each violation, in addition to its ordinary consequences, is sure to be, through his peculiar sensibility, the occasion of peculiar suffering. He has sunk below the level of his ideal, and his misery is proportionably

greater as his ideals are higher than those of ordinary men.*

Methods of Genius—Genius makes its observations in short hand; talent writes them out at length.

Triumphs of Genius—Genius speaks and acts for all men. In its triumphs all are interested. They enlarge our conceptions of the worth of humanity, and extend the limits of our capacities. In the grandeur and sweep of the poet's imagination, in the stern patience and searching analysis of the student of causes—compelling, as it were, reluctant Nature to a revelation of her secrets—we see ourselves, as in a magnifying mirror, enlarged and exalted.

* Usually, the union of a good understanding with kindly and ingenuous feelings insures a greater degree of reasonableness in our projects and intercourse with the world, than a larger measure of those higher qualities that go to make up what we call genius. I hope, therefore, that my children may turn out to be, if not great geniuses, at least good and sensible men and women, being assured, that with these qualities of good sense, and honorable dispositions, they will be likely to lead lives acceptable to their Maker, creditable to themselves, and useful to society.

GIVING.

EXAMPLES are few of men ruined by giving. Men are heroes in spending—very cravens in what they give.

GOOD CHEER.

TO be of good cheer, partake of good cheer. A great destiny needs a generous diet. The English are the greatest people on earth, because they are the greatest beef-eaters. The lazzaroni of Naples are the most degraded of men, because their food is the poorest. What can be expected of a people that live on macaroni!

It is true, I have heard it said of Napoleon that he was indifferent to the attractions of a well-appointed table, and that he was even accustomed at times to rise from it with a gesture as if he resented the necessity which compelled him to eat. But this was in accordance with his iron and exceptional nature. In spite of him, I hold it for a truth that he that has not the love of good eating in his heart—— But

the philippic has been already written. See Shakspeare's

"The man that has not music in himself,"

and apply it, line by line, to the despiser of good dinners.

It has also been said of Rubens, by one of his biographers, that "from anxiety not to impair the brilliant play of his fancy he indulged but sparingly in the pleasures of the table, and drank but little wine;" while of Fuseli it is said that he was accustomed to take "quite an opposite method to stimulate the vivacity of his fancy." "And yet," Mrs. Jameson says, "when we look upon the works of the two painters, the creations of Fuseli seem to spring from the excitement of penance and fasting, and those of Rubens from the jovial spirit of high-fed indulgence." This observation of the ingenious critic is certainly very striking; but I may still be permitted to think that a little good wine,* and a generous dish now and then—not oftener than

* National drinks make national character, it might even be said. The English are a powerful people because of their generous, nourishing ale; the French a brilliant and mercu-

three times a day — are of service in quickening a tame fancy, and in enlivening a dull imagination.

GOOD-NATURE.

WIT charms by the hour, but the charm of good-nature never ceases. Good-nature is to our life what the Nile is to Egypt — the great source of its fertility and beauty. One never even works so well as when he labors in the company of the laughing Hours. Indeed, “without good-nature,” as Bacon avers, “man is only a better sort of vermin.”

Nations, as well as individuals, lose their greatest advantage in losing their good-nature. Have not the French conquered more by their manners than their arms? Theirs is the language of courts, because it is the language of vivacity and good-nature.

rial people because of their light claret and sparkling champagne; and the Germans a heavy people because of their stupefying lager-beer.

GRAVITY.

GRAVITY is twin-brother to Austerity, and has among its immediate connections Frigidity, Stupidity, and Duplicity. The gravest people in Europe are the Spaniards, and they are among the least informed; the French are the gayest, and they are among the most intelligent. Indeed, the only persons who are always grave are those who are always dull. There should be a statute against gravity. Gravity is inconsistent with good-fellowship. In a pleasant company, gravity must be laid aside: if it can be laid aside at will, it is not a part of the character; if not a part of the character, it is a fraud; and if a fraud, it deserves no quarter.

“Gravity,” says Sterne’s Yorick, “is an arrant scoundrel, and of the most dangerous kind — because a sly one. . . . In the naked temper which a merry heart discovers,” he adds, “there is no danger — but to itself; whereas the essence of gravity is design.” Without adopting this extreme view, it is still certain, that a grave face, a formal manner, measured and parsimonious speech, and an observance of the little pro-

prieties of life, give many a man a reputation for sagacity which he could never acquire by acting or conversing with freedom. But it is equally true, that if he succeeds in making his friends believe him wondrous wise, a vigilant observer and quiet speculator upon passing events, he will be much annoyed by an awkward consciousness that his character is misunderstood—that he is not the man his friends take him for—though perhaps the only difference between him and them will be, that while he assumes but one character in the great masquerade of life, and plays his part well, they personate a dozen, with indifferent success, from having too much business on their hands.

Gravity in Old Men—When you see a particularly grave old gentleman, the odds are that he was once the gayest of young fellows. The gayest young men make the gravest old men.





HABITS.

A HIGHER individuality can only be maintained through superior habits. He who lives like other men, will become like other men. We cannot live above the active life of a period, and mingle with it. Living in it, we become corrupted by it—adopting its aims, accepting its estimates, and imbibing its modes of thought and feeling. The condition of superiority to prevailing passions is to stand aloof from them.

Habits influence the character pretty much as undercurrents influence a vessel, and whether they speed us on the way of our wishes, or retard our progress, their influence is not the less important because imperceptible.

Up to maturity we grow into certain bad habits of thought and of action peculiar to our times. After that, it is fortunate if we ever

even begin to grow out of them. It is much, indeed, if we can drop even one bad habit a year; but this is more than most of us do in a lifetime.

Habit, to a great extent, is the forcing of nature to your way, or to a conventional method, instead of leaving her to her own. Struck by this consideration, "He is a fool, then," said W., "who has any habits." Softly, my dear sir, the position is an extreme one. Bad habits are very bad; and good habits, blindly adopted, are not altogether good, as they make machines of us. Occasional excesses may be good, and nature accommodates herself to irregularities as a ship to the action of waves. But still: Good habits are in the nature of confederates: we may strengthen ourselves by an alliance with them.

As far as possible, our habits should be in accordance with, and subordinate to, some plan of life. We have plans for business, and plans of pleasure; plans for the morrow, and plans for the year; plans indeed for almost everything. Why not, then, a plan of life?

Of course, there is a distinction to be made between bad habits and a bad character. Of many, indeed, it may be said, that it is their habits which are exceptionable, not themselves.

HAPPINESS.

OUR happiness depends chiefly upon the estimate we form of life, and the efforts we make to bring ourselves into harmony with its laws.

Happiness and unhappiness, again, are more qualities of mind, than incidents of place or position. "Were I in search of the most miserable and the most happy of men," said Dr. Warton, "I would look for them in a cloister."

Happiness and Optimism—There is a philosophy that lifts all beauty from the face of things, and that imbues all objects with a coloring of sadness; such is his philosophy who looks too much to the negative of things. Only the optimist looks wisely on life. Though the actual world is not to his liking, it is the happiness of

the optimist to carry a nobler in his thought. Let us study the good in things, to the same extent that attention is given to the ills of life, and reverence, religion, and happiness will be greatly promoted.

HASTE.

HASTE is unseemly. No gentleman ever runs. It is too undignified. At least, he never runs except to some heroic end — say to save another's life (his own would scarce be worth so great a sacrifice), or to escape a constable. Seriously, haste turns usually upon a matter of ten minutes too late, and may be avoided by a habit like that of Lord Nelson, to which he ascribed his success in life, of being ten minutes too early.

HATREDS.

THINGS, not persons, are the proper subjects of hatred. One must have hatreds as vents for his passions. Hatreds are the chimneys of the mind, serving to carry off the smoke of its pestilent humors.

HAUTEUR.

I DISLIKE haughty and imperious natures. What right has any man — sprung from the dust, and destined to it—to be haughty or imperious with me? Hauteur in a man of superior consequence is an abuse of his advantage.

The pleasure we feel in being courteously noticed by a distinguished personage is of so lively a character that he has no right to refuse us a gratification that costs him so little. Mere civility in him is equal to a compliment from an equal. When, therefore, it is so easy to win “golden opinions from all sorts of people,” and he can have our “sweet voices” at the simple cost of a wave of the hand or an inclination of the head, it is churlish (as well as impolitic) in the great man to withhold these “small, sweet courtesies.”

HEALTH.

THE thing most prejudicial to health is to be always thinking of it. It is, indeed, an indispensable requisite to the enjoyment of life

and health, that little attention should be paid to little symptoms. One should not think himself dead until he is so.

HEROES AND HEROISM

I BELIEVE in great men ; but not in demigods.

The world, indeed, is rich in great men. Has not every domestic circle, every village, every town, every city, every country, its great man ?

Nature has sown the constituent qualities of heroism broadcast. Elements of the heroic exist in almost every individual: it is only the felicitous development of them all in one that is rare. Heroic imaginings, heroic aspirations, heroic resolutions — followed by not so heroic performances — these form the staple of even commonplace character.

In our historical judgments we attribute too much to man, and too little to men. It is always the general who achieves the victory — never

the soldiers. To give a further illustration—we say that Napoleon ascended the throne of the empire—meaning that he of his own act established himself upon it—instead of observing that he was placed there by the reaction of popular sentiment, yearning for order after a long period of civil commotion.*

And yet, let me not be understood as desiring to disparage heroes and heroism—

“For though the giant ages heave the hill,
And break the shore, and evermore
Make and break, and work their will;
Though worlds on worlds, in myriad myriads roll
Round us, each with different powers,
And other forms of life than ours,
What know we greater than the soul?
On God and godlike men we build our trust.”†

Perhaps the heroic element in our natures is exhibited to the best advantage, not in going

* Indeed, Napoleon, who seemed to lead it, was, in great part, but a creature of the Revolution. That mighty movement, issuing out of causes lying deep in the past, which shook the thrones and overturned so many of the governments of Europe, was not to be resisted or turned aside.

† Tennyson.

from success to success, and so on through a series of triumphs, but in gathering, on the very field of defeat itself, the materials for renewed efforts, and in proceeding, with no abatement of heart or energy, to form fresh designs upon the very ruins and ashes of blasted hopes. Yes, it is this indomitable persistence in a purpose, continued alike through defeat and success, that makes, more than aught else, the hero.

HISTORY.

TRUTH comes to us from the past, as gold is washed down from the mountains of Sierra Nevada, in minute but precious particles, and intermixed with infinite alloy, the debris of the centuries.

History and Fable—The business of the historian is with the truth of things, but he is too much under temptation to make his history interesting, to be always able to reject a fine story. Witness the curious account of the Phoenix in Tacitus. Witness also the stories of

prodigies, gravely related, in the elder histories, as well as the "guesses at truth" of all historians who treat of the motives, or affect to disclose the designs, of their personages. Indeed, the best of histories is chiefly a series of ingenious surmises.* Hear what Thucydides, who claims to be the truest of historians, and who takes care to tell us that fable and fiction should have no place in history, says of his method of

* We see the puppets dance, but the springs which move them are invisible, and must be conjectured. "History is a fable agreed upon," said Napoleon. "There is properly no history," says Emerson, "only biography." But these observations are too sweeping. "False in part, false in the whole," is a maxim not to be too literally accepted. At the utmost, the proportion of error to truth in historical records is probably not greater than that of evil to good in human affairs—as to which see the wise remarks of a Scotch philosopher. "Men," he says, "are apt to let their imaginations run out upon the crimes of history; thence concluding all mankind to be very wicked; as if a court of justice were the proper place for making an estimate of the morals of mankind, or an hospital of the healthfulness of a climate. Ought they not to consider that the number of honest citizens far surpasses that of all sorts of criminals in any state; and that the innocent or kind actions of even criminals themselves surpass their crimes in number! It is," he adds, "the rarity of crimes, in comparison of innocent or good actions, which engages our attention to them, and makes them be recorded in history, while incomparably more honest, generous, domestic actions are overlooked, only because they are so common." Hutcheson's *Essay on the Passions*, page 166.

writing it. "As to the speeches," he observes, "of particular persons, either at the commencement or during the prosecution of the war, whether such as I heard myself or such as were repeated to me by others, I will not pretend to recite them in all their exactness. *It hath been my method to consider principally what might be pertinently said upon every occasion to the points in debate, and to keep as near as possible to what would pass for genuine by universal consent.* And as for the actions performed in the course of this war, I have not presumed to describe them from any casual narratives, or my own conjectures, but either from certainty, where I myself was a spectator, or from the most exact information I have been able to collect from others. *This indeed was a work of no little difficulty, because even such as were present at those actions disagreed about them, according as affection to either side or memory prevailed.*"

Autumn a Favorable Season for Historical Studies—Autumn—a season of sweet and beautiful suggestions—lends a retrospective character to the thoughts. It is therefore the season of the year most favorable to historical studies.

The mind then turns with a certain tender regret to the summer, with all its pomp and garniture, that has just passed away—that summer to which, but a little before, we had looked forward with so much interest and expectation of enjoyment. By an easy and natural transition, it then recurs to the past of our lives, and from that again to the past in the world's history; and thus a harmony is established between the sentiment peculiar to the season and the feeling naturally awakened in studying the progress of societies and the rise and fall of States.

HOME.

HOME never appears to us so beautiful as when we are remote from it. Chilled by the indifference of the rest of the world—annoyed by the discomforts that attend us among strangers—we long to be once more within the charmed circle where they are unknown.

It is indeed in the home circle that our best qualities are displayed. For the most part, affectionate as children, tender and devoted as husbands and wives, and solicitous and self-sacrificing

as parents, happy would it be for society were kindred virtues displayed in the broader field of our out-door relations. But this can never be, so long as the constitution of society remains as it is. The domestic relations are natural relations: the social relations are artificial. To make us equally estimable, as members of society and as members of families, society must be made more a counterpart of the household—its relations more natural, and its advantages more mutual.

HONESTY.

THE first step towards greatness is to be honest," says a proverb. But the proverb fails to state the case strongly enough. Honesty is not only "the first step towards greatness"—it is greatness itself.

Honesty and Heroism—The qualities which make the hero are of less importance than the virtues which make the worthy citizen; for society may get along without heroes, but it cannot at all prosper without probity in its members.

HOUSES.

THE exterior of a house expresses the fortune of its occupant; the interior, his character.

Costly Houses — To build a huge house, and to furnish it lavishly — what is this but to play baby-house on a large scale?

Costly Religious Houses — While so many are unprovided with adequate food, shelter, and raiment, the erection of enormously costly churches is an evil. The good that churches do is not according to their magnitude or splendor. Where churches are most magnificent, men are the most degraded. A technical piety displaces natural religion. God is too great to be honored with the poor accessories of our human invention. Simplicity of heart is our best offering.

HUMILITY.

HUMBLE yourself," says the proud priest. But, humility is one of the marks of an abject spirit. It sits gracefully only upon a few,

whose recognized worth and position place them above misconstruction.

HUNTING.

HUNTING is a relic of the barbarism that once thirsted for human blood, but is now content with the blood of animals. And as to the sportsman—a Tarquin of the woods and fields, stealing upon a poor bird to ravish its life—he is, to my thinking, no very exalted personage. Better a bird upon the wing—its melody in the air—than fluttering bloodily upon the ground.

HUSBANDS AND WIVES.

NEXT to faith in God, a wife should have faith in her husband, and he in her.

A husband should accept his wife, and she him, as a friend his friend, upon a general and a generous estimate. Particulars in character and conduct should be overlooked.

A wife should warmly sympathize with her

husband's aims, if judicious, or gently win him from them, if not so; for beyond that of all others her sympathy is to him the most precious, and her want of it the most felt. "If, together with a little security and leisure," says Michelet, "we had seasons of more exalted life, and could make our wives the companions of our studies, and kindle their minds by ours, . . . 'twould be too much. All that we should ask from Heaven would be such an eternity here below."

A young husband's affections are but in the acorn state. Just as the little acorn expands in time into the stately oak, and the birds of the air come and sit upon its limbs and sing amidst its branches, so the undeveloped love of the young husband will grow in due season to fuller and larger proportions, and little children will come to nestle in his arms and prattle about his knees.

We err when we determine the affection between husbands and wives by our observation of their deportment towards each other in public. That the test is unreliable may be inferred

from the parallel case of lovers, with whom it is more common to assume indifference to each other in society, than to betray excessive regard. Both reserve all expressions of fondness for their hours of privacy. Love ever seeks a secluded bower.

Almost any one can tell when a gentleman accompanying a lady is her husband, from his want of a certain delicacy of attention to her. If he is particularly neglectful, he may be set down as her brother.

Many wives are miserable, not from wanting the affections of their husbands, but from the absence in that affection of the quality of tenderness.

The love of some men for their wives is like that of Alfieri for his horse. "My attachment for him," said he, "went so far as to destroy my peace every time that he had the least ailment; but my love for him did not prevent me from fretting and chafing him whenever he did not wish to go my way."

Scarcely anything, among minor matters, tends more to lessen a husband's regards, than the absence of a certain elegance in the dress and household management of his wife. How can the heart continue to love, when the eye is constantly taking exceptions?

Men treat their second wives better than their first. They are certain that their first wives love them, but having grown older and less attractive, they are not so sure of the love of their second wives, and take care to subject it to no trials. Perhaps, too, as a friend suggests, a tender remorse with regard to the first wife may lead to a more generous measure of consideration and kindness to the second.





IDEAS.

THE pleasantest world to live in is the world of ideas. This is the scholar's, the wit's, the poet's, the artist's, the philosopher's world.

The ideas of things precede and lead to their creation.* The forms and properties of matter are God's thoughts; the graces and appliances of art, so many expressions of human ideas.

Napoleon's disparagement of men of ideas — "idealists," as he was accustomed to term them — was little in keeping with his usual sagacity. Evolutions of new ideas are the precursors of revolutions in states. No man ever owed more than he to the ideas of his time, and certainly no public man ever suffered more

* Instances of accidental and unexpected discoveries and combinations of course occur, but they are so few as to form only exceptions to this generalization.

from ceasing to represent and to go along with them.*

As all particular acts are done under, upon the instigation, and by the light of particular or general ideas, so he who has added to the stock of prevalent ideas may claim to have put an impelling spirit into the minds of men, and to have influenced more or less of their circumstances. Indeed, nearly every important change in the life of nations, as in the lives of individuals, may be traced to, and found to have originated in, the springing up of some great or new idea. They are impelled forward in a new career by the force of a novel and profound conviction, and the fresh and vigorous impulses to which it gives rise. More pointedly, the ideas of an age in time make the facts of that age.

Our ideas, however, must first acquire a certain

* Napoleon, while at the head of a great empire, by the adoption of a more magnanimous policy, and by standing forward as the representative of the more advanced ideas of his period, could have permanently revolutionized Europe. Even at St. Helena he had the ear of the world, and by an acknowledgment of his errors, and a disavowal of the policy that had been fatal to himself and to the liberties of Europe, he might still have largely influenced its destinies.

strength, before we can proceed efficiently to act upon them. They have their periods of immaturity and maturity. First comes the germ of the idea ; then its growth ; then an enlargement of that growth ; then an expansion of that enlargement ; until finally the idea takes its ultimate form as a picture, a book, or a revolution. Or, starting into being as impressions, ideas next assume the shape of perceptions ; moving a stage beyond this, they take the character of opinions ; and finally, advancing to their potential state, they are resolved into convictions. Reformations in individuals, and revolutionary movements in states, as before intimated, are the results of long preëxistent impressions taking this final and more determinate form, and from convictions passing to resolves, and from resolves to their embodiment in action.

Comparative Value of Ideas—In regard to their several degrees of merit, ideas may be divided, like the animal and vegetable kingdoms, into classes or families. First in rank are those ideas that have in them the germs of a great moral unfolding, as the ideas of a great moral teacher like Christ ; next in merit are those

ideas that lay open the secrets of nature, or add to the combinations of art, as the ideas of inventors and discoverers; next in the order of excellence are all new and valuable ideas on diseases and their treatment, on the redress of social abuses, on governments and laws, and their administration, and all similar ideas on all other subjects connected with material welfare or intellectual and moral development; and last and least, ideas that are only the repetition of other ideas, previously known, though not so well expressed.

Happiness a Resulting Incident of Just and Elevated Views—There is an intimate connection between elevated ideas, involving a generous estimate of life and humanity, and an habitually cheerful frame of mind; for here the cheerfulness is a part of the philosophy, while elsewhere it is without enduring support, casual, accidental, and subject to the ebbs and flows of a varying fortune.

Nations Representatives of Ideas—Every great nation represents distinctively some leading idea. Thus, the Greeks represented the idea of intel-

lectual force; the Romans the idea of military domination; Spain and modern Italy the idea of unity of faith; the English the idea of commercial supremacy; France the idea of social advancement; Germany the idea of philosophical development; Russia and Austria the idea of absolutism in government, and the United States the idea of political equality.*

IDIOSYNCRASIES.

THERE is a great deal of that species of injustice in the world which requires every man to act up to a certain standard of conduct without reference to his idiosyncrasies. Many men have to war with the limitations of an originally inferior endowment when they endeavor to live up to a more elevated standard.†

* "America," said Lord Chatham, "was settled upon ideas of liberty." To uphold and to develop these ideas — the fundamental ideas of their nationality — is, for Americans, the highest and most imperative of duties.

† I once knew a worthy of whom it was affirmed that he had never said or done a civil thing in his life. Not even his interest could induce him to be courteous. Being on one occasion seriously ill, and asked by his physician how he felt to-day, he answered gruffly — "Pretty much as I did yesterday." "And how did you feel yesterday?" "Why, pretty much as I do to-day."

They are as nature made them, and a tender regard for their deficiencies of temper or judgment is therefore due to them. Besides, the wisdom of God is to be recognized both in his superior and his inferior creations.

ILLUSIONS.

MUCH of the pleasure of life comes from its illusions. As one by one these depart, Time kindly puts new ones in their places.

Perhaps no illusion, in ourselves, in our friends, or in society at large, ought to confound us. What wonder that the soundest judgments are sometimes deceived, when the very powers of nature unite to that end!—when light itself, which reveals all things, also inverts them, as in a mirage!

An illusion dissipated is an experience gained.*

* Among the pleasant illusions, rudely dissipated by recent events, from the American mind, is that of the superior character of at least a portion of the English people. There is, however, some truth mixed up with their calumnies upon American character and institutions. For the rest, it is well to remember that the worst qualities, both of the English and the American character, find their expression in

IMAGINATION.

WITHOUT imagination a man is but a poor creature. His life is like a night without a moon to gild it.*

INDOLENCE.

ALL is not indolence that seems so. Physically inert, intellectually active, is a frequent combination. The poet Thomson passed for a miracle of indolence, but he was rather a prodigy of industry. The amount of close, accurate observation of nature in his "Seasons" is truly wonderful. He was accustomed to remain in bed till long after the usual hours for rising, but this, we may suppose, was that he might the more conveniently carry on his processes of thought.

certain infamous journals—the organs and the occasions of these calumnies.

* "The imagination," says Goethe, "should not deal in facts, nor be employed to establish facts." But this is in conflict with a sounder remark of Buckle. "In the pursuit of truth," he more wisely holds, "we have need of all our powers. The most effective way," he adds, "of turning our observations to account, is to give more scope to the imagination, and to incorporate the spirit of poetry with the spirit of science."

The cause of laziness is physiological. It is an infirmity of the constitution, and its victim is as much to be pitied as a sufferer from any other constitutional infirmity. It is even worse than many diseases, for from them the patient may recover, while this is incurable. It holds the same rank among infirmities that Shakspeare does among the poets: like him, it endures, "not for a day, but for all time." A young and sturdy beggar once held out his hand to Mari-vaux for relief. "Why do you not work?" said the poet. "Ah," replied the other, "if you only knew how lazy I am." This was giving the rationale of the thing.

The lazy-minded dislike the active-minded—principally because they are overshadowed by them, and next, because they are drawn along by them faster than suits their slower natures.

On short jobs the lazy work harder and faster than the industrious. Their intolerance of labor makes them work with energy to get through with it.

INNOCENCE.

INCREASE of knowledge is the death of innocence, but it favors the growth of virtue. The distinction between the two is neatly indicated in a lively remark of one of the characters in Madame De Girardin's comedy of "Lady Tartuffe" — "I do not believe in virtue," says he, "but I do believe in innocence. They are very different. Innocence is ignorance."

INSTITUTIONS.

IT is idle to talk of institutions as sacred. They are but human means adapted to human ends. If after trial they are found to work satisfactorily, it is well; if imperfectly, then the sooner they are modified, or swept away, the better.

The conservative doctrine is, that the institutions of the time are the best for the time; but if this is to be always said, it is clear we shall never have better.

Social and Political Institutions of the United States—The great problem which the United States have to solve is a social one. Politically they have already gone almost as far as it is possible to go. To the great boon of political equality, must be added the inestimable blessing of a greater social equality.*

INTOLERANCE.

THE intolerance and aggressions of foreign sects, whose doctrines we are taught to reject, embody a warning against similar intolerance and aggressions on the part of that sect to which we, from education, prejudice, and habit, are attached. It is even an article of faith with many worthy Protestants, who ought to be better informed, that intolerance is almost peculiar to the Romish Church; while it is but an incident in the history of every sect, including even the Quakers, whose intolerance of music, danc-

* That this is distinctively the great office of the American people—to lift society to a more equal plane with the character of their political institutions—appears from this, that without it their very political system must itself perish. A government to be perpetuated must bring into accord with itself the society over which it is erected.

ing, and the fine arts, added to some peculiarities of household and social discipline, forbid the exception I was about to make in their favor. The Puritans were as intolerant as ever the Catholics were, only they wanted the power to exert the spirit of repression upon the same extended scale. And many Protestant towns, even now, are as much priest-ridden as Rome itself, only in them the influence of the clergy is exerted in less pronounced ways, and is not, as at Rome, compacted into an organized system.

INVENTIONS.

THE importance of events is far from proportionate to the noise they make in the world. Occasionally one sees in his newspaper a little paragraph of a few lines, in which a new invention is announced. But little ado is made about it; it creates little stir abroad, and people are not seen to gather into groups to talk about it; but for all that a great event has happened, a new agent of a more advanced civilization has come into being, and the world has, though ever so quietly, moved forwards another step in its great career of beneficial progress.

IRRITABILITY.

A GOOD-NATURED disposition is often associated with an ill-natured set of nerves; these, more than the former, being responsible for our ebullitions of irritability. Indeed, there is a certain irritability of the nervous system that provokes enemies without deserving them, just as there is a certain selfish control of it that enables us, without merit, to conciliate friends. In my visits to zoölogical collections, I have observed that the keepers, as well as the visitors, when permitted, seem to take a particular pleasure in stirring up, with their sticks or canes, the nervous temperament of the hyena. While the majestic lion takes all such annoyances "more in sorrow than in anger," and is therefore left to enjoy his ease with dignity undisturbed, the known nervous irritability of the other beast affords a constant temptation to provoke him into displays of it. The treatment he thus receives yields a fair illustration of the similar treatment to which the irritable among men—irritable because possessed of a like high and sensitive nervous organization—are usually, and for similar reasons, exposed.



KINDNESS.

A LANGUAGE which the dumb can speak, and the deaf can understand.

It speaks well for the native kindness of our hearts, that nothing gives us greater pleasure than to feel that we are conferring it.

KISSES.

IT is a waste of sweetness for a woman to kiss a woman. Kisses should be sacred to lovers. It is the passion that is in a kiss that gives to it its sweetness: it is the affection in a kiss that sanctifies it.

KNOWLEDGE.

IT is not the number of facts he knows, but how much of a fact he is himself, that proves the man.

We know many things indifferently — superficially — but few, very few, thoroughly. “Ask an enthusiast in the Sistine Chapel how many ribs he has,” says Ruskin, “and you get no answer; but it is odds that you do not get out of the door without his informing you that he considers such and such a figure badly drawn.” Of a like imperfect character is much of the information of even the best informed. And necessarily so. As with the universe, so with knowledge — “centre is everywhere, circumference nowhere.”

I desire no such increase in my knowledge of the world as will lead to a more unfavorable opinion of it. Every such gain in wisdom is a loss of happiness, from its impairing that faith in the Great Father and his children upon which our happiness mainly rests.

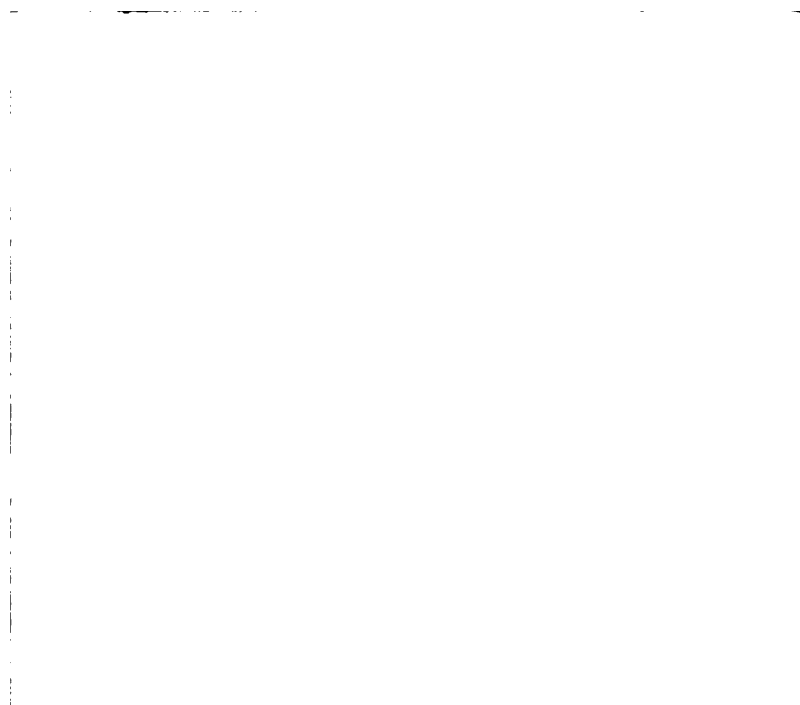
Chiefly the good is worth knowing — only the beautiful is worth studying.*

* “Nothing so beautiful as truth.” — *Des Cartes*.

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